

THE LUTHER LEAGUE OF AMERICA

# High Ideals

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# High Ideals

WINTER 19  
JANUARY, FEBRUARY, MARCH  
VOLUME 24, NUMBER 1

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## COVER PICTURE

PLANNING THAT LUTHER LEAGUE TOPIC SEEMS TO BE SO MUCH EASIER WHEN YOU HAVE "THE ONE" BESIDE YOU, ESPECIALLY ON THOSE RARE WINTER DAYS WHEN IT'S WARM ENOUGH TO SIT OUTSIDE.

PHOTO—H. ARMSTRONG ROBERTSON

HIGH IDEALS is published quarterly by the Luther League of America, official youth organization of the United Lutheran Church in America. Publication office: Kutztown Publishing Company, 241 West Main Street, Kutztown, Pennsylvania. Editorial office: 1228 Spruce Street, Philadelphia 7, Pennsylvania. Prices: Single copies, 35 cents; single subscriptions, \$1.00 each per year; in clubs of ten or more, 90 cents each per year. Entered as second class matter at Kutztown, Pennsylvania.

# BE A PEN PAL

These teen-agers would like to write to other Luther Leaguers. Would you like to be a pen pal? Write to one of them or send your name, address, age, league, and list of hobbies or interests to "Pen Pal Page" in care of HIGH IDEALS, Luther League of America.

MARY ANN DUNN, 846 N. Dement Avenue, Dixon, Ill. Age: 16. Member St. Paul's, Nachusa. Interests: Rink skating, aerobics, sports, church activities, and Pen Pals.

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CHARLES STONER, 1703 McLean Street, Falls City, Nebr. Age: 12. Interests: Sports, fishing, and swimming.

LARRY BEASING, 2009 Morton Street, Falls City, Nebr. Age: 12. Interests: Sports, photography, and collecting stamps.

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MARY CAROL PICTON, 1423 McLean Street, Falls City, Nebr. Age: 13. Interests: Sports, music, flute, piano, and swimming.

CAROLYN ANN FARKAS, 1343 Balltown Rd., Schenectady 9, New York. Age: 15. Member First English League. Interests: Sewing, sports, Pen Pals, and Girl Scouts.

CAROLYN BLACKWELDER, Route 13, Box 588, Concord, North Carolina. Age: 14. Member Mount Hermon League. Interests: Pen Pals, music, dancing, Luther League, and church work.

CONNIE ZODY, Perrysville, Ohio. 10th Grade. Member St. John League. Interests: Drum majorette and Luther League.

CAROLYN HENRY, Perrysville, Ohio. 8th Grade. Member St. John League. Interests: Piano, band, and Luther League.

JEAN FELTY, 429 Willow Street, Lebanon, Penna. Age: 13½. Member St. James League. Hobbies: Reading, sports, Pen Pals, collecting post cards, skating, dancing, and music.

BEVERLY G. MUIR, R. D. 1, Saylorsburg, Penna. Age: 14. Member Hamilton Parish Luther League. Hobbies: Choir, Luther League, reading, popular music, swimming, and dancing.

JAMES A. SMITH, R. D. 1, Saylorsburg, Penna. Age: 14. Member Hamilton Parish League. Interests: Luther League, collecting napkins, Pen Pals, popular music, and square dancing.

JUDY WINTERS, 1148 W. Third Street, Williamsport, Penna. Age: 13. Member St. Mark's League. Interests: Sports, reading, church activities, swimming, and Pen Pals.

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LINDA ORTMANN, 316 Meacham St., Mukwonago, Wisconsin. Age: 15. Member Mt. Olive LL. Interests: Roller skating, dancing, swimming, ice skating, choir, and church activities.

RENA JANE WUHRMAN, 1507 Parnell Street, Marinette, Wisconsin. Age: 14. Member St. James Church. Interests: Luther League, church activities, ice skating, swimming, dancing, Pen Pals, and accordion.

Being a carbon copy is dull business. Be yourself.  
Learn your own distinctive traits of personality.  
And try to understand the differences in others.

## Dare to Be Different

By Ann Lytle Miller

**"YOU** are different and unique," says Rhoda Lachar in her currently popular book *You Are Unlimited*. "God created you so. Then he destroyed the mold in which you were cast. There is no other human being just like yourself. Even identical twins have slight variations in their make-up. You have feelings, thoughts, aptitudes, characteristics, capacities, and abilities.

"Had God wanted all of us to be alike, he would not have gone to the extremes he did in making each of us so different. He did not do a job of mass production. Evidently he wanted each of us to be different. That is why he created us individually and uniquely."

Frankly, however, to be able to look into a mirror and see yourself as an inde-

pendent personality is an ability some people never acquire. They want nothing so much as to be like everyone else. They are deadly afraid of being peculiar, so they make their fingernails green or their hair streaked or their saddle shoes different just because everyone else is doing it. They think the new coach is "racy" because George" simply because everyone else does. They think roller skating is fashionable and movies are dull, or perhaps it's the other way around, just because someone else thinks so.

It's possible to go to the other extreme too. A person may become so individualistic that he becomes a public nuisance. You know the type: "Life of the party," "Good Joe," the "Everybody-look-at-me" sort of character who is always out-



Teen-ers want so much to be like everybody else that they just melt into the mob. Their opposites are the big show-offs. Between the two you can strike a happy balance.

o. He thinks he is expressing his dynamic personality when all he is doing is airing his egotism.

Now the truth of the matter is this: Each of these blunders—undue imitation of the crowd and too high an estimate of yourself—spring from natural instincts. On the one hand, you are a social animal, you feel the pull of the crowd, you are happy in the midst of friends, you are unhappy when you are lonely. On the other hand, you have an urge to self-expression, you have desires, impulses, ambitions within you that clamor to be set free.

Your problem is how to reconcile the two instincts.

You have gone a long way toward growing up when you realize that you have a right to express your individuality, and that every other person has the same right. It follows then that we must all do everybody else realize his best self. Did you ever say, "Oh, it takes all kinds to make a world" in trying to ex-

plain the antics of a friend? It's true! It does take all kinds, each supplying all he has to give. Just think: It took an architect, a contractor, carpenters, masons, plasterers, electricians, painters, and a host of others to construct the room in which you are meeting. It took the devoted work of poets, musicians, editors, printers, bookbinders, and countless others to create the hymnal you use in your worship. It took lumbermen, metal workers, cabinet makers, felt manufacturers, ivory hunters in Africa, and numerous skilled technicians to create the piano which aids you in worship. Truly, it takes all kinds to make a world.

### What "Kind" Are You?

You, at your point in life, must find what "kind" you are. Whether God intended you to be a planner or a worker, a leader or a follower, a dreamer or a digger, you must look into your inner mirror to find out. Since you are a unique personality you have a unique

## ORDER OF WORSHIP

PRELUDE: "I Would Be True"

HYMN: "Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty"—*Christian Youth Hymnal* 101

CALL TO WORSHIP: Come into our hearts, Heavenly Father, and speak to us.  
Help us to see ourselves as we actually are and then lead  
us to become loving, tolerant, and understanding, through  
Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

LEADER: You can't see through a mirror. You can only see yourself.  
At this meeting we are going to think about the gospel according to you.

POEM: "You are writing a gospel  
A chapter each day,  
By deeds that you do,  
By words that you say.  
"Men read what you write,  
Whether faithless or true;  
Say, what is the gospel  
According to you?"—*Masterpieces of Religious Verse* No. 1146

LEADER: You are important in the sight of God. You are the highest of God's  
creation. As we read the eighth Psalm together, think about the worth  
of each individual.

PSALM 8: (Read responsively.)

LEADER: If you are important in the sight of God, then by the same token, so  
is every individual, regardless of race or background or customs. As  
Christians, let us love our fellowmen.

SCRIPTURE: I John 4: 7-21

PRAYER: Christ,  
Grant us this boon,  
To look with thine eyes of pity and love  
On all men's need:  
To feel from within, with thee,  
The bite of pain, of hunger, of wrong:  
To live wholly beyond ourselves,  
In deep and active desire of help for the needy and weak.  
Christ,  
Conquer the selfish greed in our hearts,  
And grant us power to act,  
To struggle, to build,  
For the coming of thy full kingdom,  
Where no man is wronged, greed and violence vanish away,  
And in all God's world true brotherhood reigns.

—John S. Hoyland (*Masterpieces of Religious Verse*)

SOLO OR HYMN: "O Brother Man"—*Christian Youth Hymnal* 280

TOPIC PRESENTATION:

CLOSING HYMN: "I Would Be True"—*Christian Youth Hymnal* 284.

portunity to make a unique contribution to the world. You can break your back trying to be like everyone else, living and thinking as they do, or you can have the courage to accept your individuality and develop it into the "going, strong, knowing, thinking, happy person" that meant you to be."

### They had different ideas

Whether you like history or not, you would have little trouble in thinking of many people who have made their own, individual, distinctive contributions to society and to the mainstream of human life. There was Martin Luther, who differed from the theologians of his day, but he turned the hearts of men to a new and different search for God. There was Ben Franklin, standing in a thunderstorm with his kite and key when the "sensible" people were indoors, but he set man on the way to harnessing the power of electricity. Think of Louis Pasteur who had a different idea about the spread of disease, and so thereby has saved thousands of lives. There was Abraham Lincoln, who dared to have new and radical thoughts about the worth of the black man in the sight of God, and who, by acting upon his different thoughts, brought fresh hope and meaning in life not only to the black man but also to the white.

Or you might look at your own town. The doctor and the man who delivers the coal are different, but both make a positive contribution to your life. Your pastor and your grocer are different, but both are essential. The librarian and the milkman are different, but who can say which of all of these is most important? It would be a very dull world, wouldn't it, if everyone were like you. It would be monotonous—without color and variety. Yet, strange to say, we often dislike or distrust people for no better reason than that their customs, opinions, nationality, social position, or race are different from our own. Anatole France wrote a biting satire which he called *Penguin Island*. In it, a philosopher, travelling on Penguin Island was sur-

prised to discover that the Penguins fiercely hated their neighbors, the Porpoises. He inquired the reason for this hatred.

"Need you ask?" replied a young farmer. "Are not the Porpoises neighbors of the Penguins?"

"Is that a reason?" asked the philosopher.

"Certainly," the young man answered. "He who says 'neighbors' says 'enemies' . . ."

Evidently the young man didn't believe it takes all kinds to make a world. He only thought it took Penguins.

A great many young people, and adults too, carry this same feeling of antagonism toward whatever is different. But Jesus certainly didn't feel like this. Matthew and Zacchaeus were tax-gatherers, and in that day a tax-gatherer rated low on all popularity polls. Yet these men were friends of Jesus. The wealthy Joseph of Arimathea was a friend of his; so was the alien and erring woman of Samaria, and the penitent Mary Magdalene: and the quiet, good, simple Mary and Martha and Lazarus.

In other words, Jesus liked people. In nearly all of them he saw something lovable and something good. It is noteworthy that the sin for which he reserved his sternest condemnation was the sin of unbrotherliness and unkindness and intolerance.

Christian fellowship takes advantage of differences for the common good. When we plan a picnic, we find ourselves assigning one task to one person, another to another, because each of us has different talents. "Let Mary plan the food," we'll say, "she's grand at that." . . . "Say, let's be sure to put Jim on the entertainment committee because nobody thinks up so many things that are fun to do." It would be silly if these differences separated Mary and Jim and all the rest, wouldn't it? Rather, they should draw them together.

Learning to love and enjoy people who are different will help the cause of world peace. This hatred and jealousy between nations is partially based on narrow, stu-

pid hostility toward what is strange and foreign and different. Because we don't quite understand foreign ways that are different from our own we say, "How peculiar! I don't like them."

### "So Wild and un-English"

Such hatred reminds me of a story I heard about some Americans who went to a concert in London. The program was all Russian music. (This was back in the day before politics regulated musical taste.) The Americans were quite amused, in the midst of the rather barbaric music, to hear an outraged voice behind them comment, "I say," the voice with English accent remarked indignantly, "I don't half like this! It's so wild and un-English!" Naturally it was un-English, being Russian. But to that particular gentleman, being un-English meant being wrong. There are thousands of people in every nation who feel the same way about their country in relation to other countries.

It isn't just nations, of course, who dislike each other for no reason except they are different and don't understand each other. It's various sections of the same country. It's different states. It's different towns. It's different groups in the same town.

It's different colors too. The white man distrusts the black and the black the white because they are different and they both dislike the yellow for no better reason. The white race has a particular case of self-love about the color of its skin, forgetting that God uses many colors as he paints the canvas of mankind.

But some men do learn to appreciate their differences. We might profit from their experiences. My friend George is a Nisei—a native born American whose parents came from Japan. Through most of his life he has been subjected to varying degrees of discrimination because God made him different from some other people. A few years ago he bought a home in a midwestern city. Soon the president of the local property-owners association called upon him with a petition,

asking that he sign an agreement not to sell his property to a Negro. He was angered at such a request, and refused to sign. Later he remarked, "You know that was the first time in my life that I've known what it was like to be on the other side of the fence." Having suffered because of his difference, he refused to cause others to suffer also. George learned to use his difference.

Look at yourself in the mirror of your soul. Try to understand yourself. Recognize the distinctive traits of your personality and be grateful, without egotism. Recognize the difference of others and understand, without intolerance. If you are inclined to be critical of others, be sure to keep a mirror handy.

"Be sure to keep a mirror always nigh  
In some convenient, handy sort of place  
And now and then look squarely  
In thine eye,  
And with thyself keep ever face to  
face."

(John K. Bangs Bartlett  
*Familiar Quotations*)

### Suggestions for the leader

After presenting the topic, supply each member with pencil and paper and ask everyone to write the name of some person in the community who has made wholesome use of a difference and tell how. Collect the papers and have someone read them. Discussions should follow.

Ask each member to write how he is different and how he might better use the unabilities God has given him. These papers are not to be read but are to be taken home and studied prayerfully.

### Service project

If there is a home for handicapped children near you, obtain permission to visit a group and present a program. Or, collect toys, picture books, a collection of Bible stories from Sunday school leaflets, etc., to give to these children.

Some orphanages such as the Oester Home in Ohio are happy to have children take a two-week vacation in Lutheran homes during the summer. Perhaps some of your homes could be opened to these children.

Think of ways to help blind or crippled people in your community.



Hundreds of teen-agers gain satisfaction helping with small fry during Sunday school.

## With Love . . . From You

Even your best friend will not know  
about your silent deeds of kindness.

By Polly Johnson Hanst

### Program Pointers

FROM this topic can grow a thrilling venture for every member of your league. You probably recall the legend of the Knights of the Silver Shield in which the shields of the knights of King Arthur's court shone in exact proportion to the brave deeds they had done.

Each did deeds so all might see the glitter of his shield.

Sir Roland, however, did a fine deed of which he said nothing. In fact, he gave no thought to it thereafter. But as the knights gathered around the table, each telling of his bravery, one looked over and shouted, "Look, Sir Roland's shield!" It was shining like a star.

After you have read or told the stories in the topic, the group has discussed the questions, rated themselves with the chart, and you've told the story of the Knights of the Silver Shield let the leaguers work out their own silver shield system. Here's one way. Be sure to have materials on hand so leaguers can make their own stars.

On a bulletin board a star for each member could be pegged. One side of the star is covered with aluminum foil, the other is dull. If during the week a leaguer does a good deed, with no selfish motive, and TOLD NO ONE at league meeting he turns the bright side of the star out. Of course, everyone's curiosity will be aroused when the star shines. But that's the giver's own secret.

## Rate Yourself

Score yourself 10 for each "no" answer in the first 5. Score 10 for each "yes" answer from 6 to 10. A score of 80 is good giving. A score of 60 is just average. Under 50—you'd better stop loving yourself and start loving your fellow men.

1. I give because I feel that I should.
2. I like to give gifts that make a good showing.
3. I like to give so I can talk about it.
4. I give to those who give to me.
5. I spend more on the gifts to those who have everything, because it's hard to buy for them.
6. I give gifts because I like to get them.
7. Sometimes I give things I would like to keep.
8. I give because it's fun.
9. I give to make others happy.
10. I give to those for whom I feel sorry.

## Worship with purpose

*Hymn:* "Give of Your Best to the Master" 242 CYH

*Call to Worship:* He gives not best that gives most; but he gives most who gives best. If then I cannot give bountifully, yet I will give freely; and what I want in my hand, supply by my heart. He gives well that gives willingly. (Arthur Warwick)

*Scripture:* II Corinthians 9:7; Matthew 26:42-45.

*Prayer:* Use one from CYH, or write your own.

*Hymn:* "I Would be True" 284 CYH

**T**ENSELY Chuck leaned forward in the old row boat. With an extra tug he pulled out one of the largest bass he had ever caught. "Jeepers, she's 18 inches if she's an inch," he murmured to himself. He would need to do no cajoling to get Mom to cook this one. Already he could see the crusty brown morsel laid in a bed of parsley and lemon wedges.

It didn't matter that in the next two hours he got only one nibble. He felt like a king when Jack Stewart met him on the way home and asked to see his catch.

Jack had been fishing, too. But for a quite different reason. There never was

much food in the Stewart home, and anything Jack caught meant nourishment for the family.

While Jack was admiring the fine fish Chuck caught a strange look in his face. Could it be hunger? No, not the new hunger he was feeling from being out of doors all day, but a real hunger.

Chuck's mind shifted to the widow and her children. He had an idea. A warm idea. A glow went clear through him.

"Say, I hear your mother's been sick," he said. "Take this over to her and tell her it's my get-well card." He took the big bass off the stick, fastened it to another and handed it to Jack.

"But," protested Jack, "you'll want to show this one to the gang. Otherwise they'll never believe you when you tell your fish story."

Chuck told no fish story.

*Did Chuck go overboard with his generosity?*

*What really prompted the give away?*

*Why didn't Chuck talk about his prize catch?*

**M**ISS JESSIE lived in the biggest house in town and even though she was old and couldn't get about very well she hired ample help to keep the place looking ship-shape.

Sight of the house always brought happy memories to any leaguers who passed. Miss Jessie had been leader of the children's department of the Sunday school for years. In fact, she really lived for that.

At Christmas she always went to the city to shop for "her youngsters." Every child knew that at Miss Jessie's party he would get the nicest and most unusual toy he had ever owned. That was what was in her mind when she bought it. Each child's personality was considered—not his needs. So her packages never contained socks and shirts . . . just toys . . . out of this world toys . . . that could be purchased only in a big city with a full purse.

Mary Ann was thinking of all this as she passed the high columned mansion on her way home from the library. Or

impulse she turned up the long walk toward the house.

"I believe I'll run in and say hello," she thought. She didn't know why she made the decision. She passed that way every day, yet it had been fully two years since she had paused to exchange a few words.

Old folk have their own friends and they can't be bothered with teeners, Mary Ann excused. Anyway there were so many of them in Miss Jessie's lifetime that she probably wouldn't remember very many of them.

A maid directed Mary Ann to the front bedroom upstairs. There Miss Jessie hugged her and patted her hand and called her by name. "Then she did remember me."

As Mary Ann gabbed along she observed the room. On every table and every wall were pictures . . . photographs of Christmas parties, snapshots of picnics, girls in bridal gowns, boys in baseball garb . . . all her beloved children of the church back as far as Mary Ann's parents.

"I've just come from the library and thought you might like to read *The Silver Chalice*," Mary Ann said. The idea had just struck her, but she knew she had done the right thing. "In two weeks I'll stop by and return it."

"In two weeks Mary Ann will be here again," Miss Jessie thought. That idea pleased her more than the book that lay on her lap.

When Mary Ann hurried down the steps toward home her heart was full and her brain was churning. "Our league must give more thought to bringing joy to others," she thought. "Sunday night I'm going to come up with an idea."

*What ideas do you think Mary Ann had?*

*Are the wealthy more often neglected than the poor?*

*What can young people do for those who seem to have enough of this world's goods?*

*Could it be possible that a half hour of time would bring more joy than a one-dollar bill?*

JIM needed some cash . . . needed it badly. He wanted to build a kayak to take on a camping trip. Now you can't really expect parents—parents of average income like Jim's—to cough up money for a thing like a kayak. They had only been able to supply half the money for his bike. He had earned the other half.

The bike! The idea hit him head on! "I'll advertise her for sale. Don't need her now that I have my driver's license."

So advertise he did—cleaned up the bike, filled the tires with air, and decided she was worth \$15.

Several people dropped around to look it over, but no one was really interested, until a scrawny 12-year-old turned up. Jim recalled that he lived in an old flat in the alley behind his dad's office. The alley was the youngsters' playground.

The 15 dollars was about as big as a million to the kid. But Jim had never seen such longing in the face of anyone.

Jim couldn't get the kid out of his mind. The more he thought the more he remembered his own 12th year and the fun the gang had on those bike hikes.

Straightway he got out a can of red paint and started in. Then he shined the chrome until she looked as good as new.

One evening after dark he left the bike tied to the door knob in the alley. On the handle bar was this note: "If there is anything left of this bike when you're through with it, fix it up and pass it on to some boy who would like it. Happy biking to you."

*Jim didn't need to be so terribly generous, did he?*

*Would it have been better had he found the boy a job?*

*Couldn't he have come down in price instead of making an outright gift?*

*Did Jim have any business to say what should be done with the bike when the youngster was through with it?*

*What explanation should he make to his family and friends about NOT making the kayak?*

Whether you get A's or F's

# School Is What You Make It

By Constance S. Rugh

## To the leader

Marks do matter in school, particularly to young people who try to carry their Christianity into all parts of their lives. Everyone can't make straight A's on report cards. But then there's A for Effort. Purpose of this topic is to make leaguers consciously and conscientiously rate their own efforts in their school life.

## Properties

This meeting can be fun with a little preparation and imagination on the leader's part. You'll need:

1. A *dunce cap* made of a large sheet of heavy paper.
2. Cardboard *spectacles*, easily cut out. They can be crude or fancy.
3. *Teacher's pointer*. Not necessary, but more fun. A yardstick will do.
4. *Report cards* will take the most work to prepare. There must be one for each leaguer present. Use file cards and draw in additional vertical lines. These will be used for self-rating test.
5. *Blackboard* is optional. Leader can put self-rating test on board.
6. *Paper and pencils*—enough for the "class."
7. *Slips with instructions* for buzz groups.

## Worship suggestions

HYMN: "Now in the Days of Youth"  
CYH 240.

SCRIPTURE: Matt. 25: 14-30 or Romans 12: 3-8.

## PRAYER:

O gracious God, we are grateful for our minds, for the ability to think and learn. We thank thee for our schools, our teachers, all who are working to prepare us for life. Help us to take better advantage of our opportunities, so that we can develop the gifts you have given us, in Jesus' name. Amen.

HYMN: "O Thou Whose Feet Have  
Climbed Life's Hill" CYH 258.

## The topic

The leader assumes the role of "teacher" throughout the program. Don't be afraid to ham it up a bit at first to get things going. Also don't stick too close to the suggestions that follow. If you have better ideas, use 'em. If the discussion gets lively, just keep it going on the right track, which is stated in the opening paragraph above.

Introduce yourself as Mr. or Miss \_\_\_\_\_, teacher for the class. Announce the art lesson.

## Art lesson

Pass out paper and pencils. Have each person draw a picture that is symbolic or represents his or her favorite subject in school. Example: A map for geography, a design of notes for music. Time limit for drawing is two minutes. Have leaguers display work and vote on best and worst. Award spectacles to best and dunce cap to worst.

The leader uses the art lesson to introduce some questions that by all rights should lead to a discussion. Here are suggested questions: (Note the word *suggested*. If a discussion gets going after only a couple of questions, don't stick to this list. Prod the leaguers along, but keep them on the right track. Don't let this discussion turn into a gripe or gigue session.)

## Questions

1. Ask several leaguers singly if they make their best marks in their favorite subjects.
2. Why should this be, if it is, true?
3. Is it necessary to study a lot on a favorite subject?

4. Does studying something you like seem like work?
5. Do you like to study other subjects, particularly ones that give trouble?
6. Do you like to study?
7. Do you know how to study? How do you study?
8. Are you satisfied to get by or do you want to do your best?
9. Does doing your best mean all this? What's the point of tests?
10. Do marks matter? If not, what does matter?

### Project for the class

When the discussion ends, the leader divides the group into buzz sessions of five or six to work on the projects. Each buzz group discusses their subject among themselves for five minutes and then reports their findings to the whole "class." Following are suggested subjects for buzz sessions:

*Friends.* Discuss the influence of friends on school work. A gang can be lazy or industrious. They can copy homework or even answers to test questions (perish the thought!) They can try to sandwich studies in between everything else. Take it over from here.

*Fun.* Studying affects fun, there's no two ways about it. Can you have fun and relaxation with homework hanging over your head? Does God expect you to work all the time or none of the time?

*Future.* Your future is tied up with what goes on in school. What about the following case?

A friend of mine decided in his senior year in high school to go to college. He eagerly filled out his application for a church college. He was refused admittance. His grades didn't measure up. When he decided to enlist in the navy and try for photography school, since that was his hobby. He failed again. He just didn't have the educational background. The officers said he might try for radar training, but it was the same old story. He wrote home: "If I had only taken my studies more seriously, I wouldn't have to look forward to swabbing decks

for four years. I had a chance at everything, but it's turned out to be nothing."

*Feeling of accomplishment.* At camp, handcraft is a favorite activity. Most items made take a lot of time and patience. Sometimes campers hurry and try to do something the easy way, to cut corners. Maybe no one will ever be able to tell the difference in the finished project, but the guy or gal will always know and always feel a bit guilty about it. A carefully finished product produces a glow of pride because the maker has done the best possible job. Relate this to school work and marks.

*Faith.* If faith in God is sincere, then all of life—school included—must be lived as God wants it. School and the life of a student can be a calling of God. Education supposedly prepares us for life and helps us learn to use our talents. Take it over from here.

### Self-rating test

After reports from the buzz sessions, the leader announces a unique "test" and hands out the "report cards" on which the test will be taken. After taking the test, leaguers rate themselves as follows: Always — 20 points; Sometimes — 10 points; Never—minus 20 points. The "teacher" concludes "class" by telling leaguers to take report cards home and try to improve score during the coming week.

Here is the test:

1. Do you eat a good breakfast before school? (Don't blame Mom for not getting up. You're mature enough to open a cereal box and to mix orange juice.)

2. Do you have a certain time set aside for study? (Ever think of study hall? Some kids I grew up with used to hike over to school early to study.)

3. Do you make sure the light is good? (Be a "bulb snatcher" if necessary.)

4. Do you make sure the room temperature is right? (Best is between 68 and 72 degrees.)

5. Do you get a good night's sleep? (Are 20-year-old movies on TV worth the hangover?)



Giving the family car a bath becomes a lot of fun when Dad and Junior pitch in together.

## You're Stuck with Parents

It's easy to get along with your family if you use large doses of kindness and consideration.

**By Ruth E. Miller**

### Plan for fun

Within your congregation are families that have already learned the art of living together. But there are others that need help. Why not plan this program as a "family frolic" so that you can enjoy yourselves as family groups?

According to my way of thinking a family frolic includes group singing,

games, an experience of sharing ideas on the "what and how" of family activities, the fellowship of eating together, and the inspiration of worship.

Underlying this get-together will be a two-fold purpose: First, it will be held "just for the fun of it." Second, ideas and ideals can be exchanged that will serve as guides for family living.

Development of the social side of the program is being left to the leader. Suggestions are included below for the devotional

onal and educational phases of the  
olic.

### Worship thoughtfully

HYMNS:

"O Blessed House, that Cheerfully Re-  
ceiveth" *Common Service Book* 416.

"O Holy Lord, Content to Fill" *CSB*  
417.

"Lord of Life and King of Glory"  
*CSB* 418.

"Saviour, Teach Me, Day by Day"  
*CSB* 568.

"Saviour, Blessed Saviour" *CSB* 564.

SCRIPTURE: (Not all of the following  
passages need be read. Select several  
and assign them to different leaguers  
and parents.)

Honor your father and mother—Deu-  
teronomy 5: 16.

Be wise—Proverbs 10: 1.

Don't be foolish—Proverbs 15: 20;  
9: 13.

Make your family happy—Ephesians  
5: 4; Psalm 127: 3; Mark 10: 14-15;  
Deut. 6: 5-7; Luke 9: 46-48; Matt. 18:  
-14; 19: 13-15.

PRAYER:

Almighty God, look graciously upon our families  
and our homes. To parents give wisdom to direct  
those committed to their charge. To all young people  
give strength to fulfill thy will in the daily work  
which thou shalt appoint them to do. Through Jesus  
Christ, our Lord. Amen.

### Leader's introduction

Parents and children are "stuck" with  
each other. You may as well make up  
your mind to that—and recognize that  
it is to your advantage to learn to get  
along with them.

Perhaps you've been harboring the idea  
within that active brain of yours that  
your parents are old-fashioned, irritating,  
and unreasonable. It may be true.

But chances are that another point of  
view is also true. You probably are no  
angel yourself. I'll wager upon the fact  
that at some time recently one of your  
parents has said to you, "I just can't un-  
derstand what has gotten into you? You  
never acted so careless and discourteous  
before. What will people think?"

Probably you quickly came to your de-  
fense with, "But I don't act this way  
when I'm away from home." Did it ever

occur to *lil ole you* that these "On Oc-  
casion" manners were partly responsible  
for some of your trouble at home? Your  
Christian behavior deserves to be so much  
a part of you that you would feel posi-  
tively queer if you acted any other way at  
any time—either at home or away from  
home.

There are "umteen" reasons why par-  
ents and off spring clash, but there's only  
one way to get along. That's THE WAY.  
The underlying principle that guides be-  
havior in the Christian home is kindness  
and consideration for others—both on  
the part of parents and offspring. To  
have a happy home, all members of the  
family need to show regard for the  
thoughts, likes, dislikes, and feelings of  
every member of the family. Doing other-  
wise is showing that you are immature  
and a child—whether you are a parent or  
a young person.

### Who am I? Parent or child?

(The following "Who am I?" quiz  
can provide a lot of fun. And it can  
help both adults and youth to see them-  
selves objectively. If there's a good mimic  
in the group—either parent or offspring  
—let him read the statements with ex-  
pression After the reading of each state-  
ment, let the group guess whether youth  
or parent was talking.)

"I wish you wouldn't always tell me  
to do something before I have time to  
do it. I mean such as, 'Hang up your  
coat and hat, dear,' before I can even  
get my arm out of my sleeve."

"I can't discuss anything with you.  
You won't listen to my side of the story.  
You are headstrong and what you say  
always goes. Why do you always say 'I'm  
not old enough to know anything?'"

"I wish you wouldn't always follow  
the 'herd' rule. All I hear is, 'But every-  
one does it, or the whole gang is going.'  
Can't you ever think for yourself?"

"Go ahead and read it, but remember  
that there are lots of better books on the  
subject. That one is just junk and it's  
pretty exaggerated. I can't keep you  
from reading it, but remember that it is

a low grade of literature and I don't approve of your reading it."

"I wish you would scold me outright when I rate it, instead of holding in your feelings and taking it out in sorrowful, disgusted looks."

"I wish you wouldn't baby me so much and insist upon going everywhere with me. I would like to go more places by myself without someone always tagging along."

"If I have a date, why must I always be home at an early time? If I am just five minutes late, I have some tall explaining to do. Why you can't trust me is beyond me?"

"Why are you always suspicious of everything I do? I'm getting to the place that I'm not caring much anymore if you do doubt me. There's no reason for you to act this way toward me."

"I don't think you have a right to pass judgment on my friends when you don't really know them."

"Why do you expect me to be a future genius? Anyone can tell that I'm not."

"Why do you always want to know who it was when a friend phones me? I think this is unfair. I should be able to have a little privacy of my own."

"Why do you always find things wrong with the way I do things? You never compliment me on anything—just gripe. I can't do anything right."

Did those quiz questions sound familiar to you? Could you hear yourself in some of them? Well, everybody can't be perfect, but people who claim to be Christian will always try to face honest criticism and improve themselves according to the example set by Christ.

When you young people begin to feel sorry for yourselves, take heart. You are living in the best years of homelife yet known to youth. You have inherited the rewards of living in a country where people recognize that boys and girls are growing creatures; passing through difficult stages in mind and body; requiring understanding, delicate handling, and a home atmosphere in which there is security, sympathy and affection.

How would you like to have lived just 150 years ago when children of 11 and 12 were hanged for stealing a few apples . . . or less than 60 years ago when children of the same age were put and kept in prison cells for very trivial offences? In early Victorian times frightened, half-starved children were compelled to work long hours in mines and factories where no one cared if they felt exhausted into unfenced machinery. If you would like to read some graphic pictures of what boys were expected to endure look into the pages of Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist*, *David Copperfield*, and *Nicholas Nickleby*. Dickens didn't exaggerate. His descriptions were painfully true to the life of that time. It has taken 19 hundred years for the idea to die out that children are "varmint" to be kept down.

In contrast to this above era, there is another side of society that can ruin children. This other side grants children every whim, buys every luxury, and allows boys and girls to do as they please. Parents who allow young people to run their own lives without guidance are crucified in the harm that they do to youth. The seeds of future unhappiness that are sown are disastrous.

### If you want a happier home

Let us now call to mind what we know about the teachings of Christ in those scenes of his ministry in which children took part. It was evident that young people meant much to Christ from his terrible condemnation of those who in any way harmed or caused them to suffer or stumble. Some of his sternest words were, "Whoso shall offend one of these little ones that believeth in me. . . ." (Matthew 18: 5-6. Leader reads the whole passage.)

The next time you feel irked about the fences that your mother and dad put around you try to remember that they are only carrying out Christ's command. He said that whatever we do for ever one child we shall be doing for him. Christ also said that adults had a great deal to learn from children because they

never could gain entrance into the kingdom of heaven unless they became more like children. Christ said that those who did become like children—simple, trustful, loving—would be greatest in the kingdom of heaven. (Mark 10: 13-16)

It is very important for you to remember that oftentimes a parent's Christian concern for his child makes him disappoint the child. It frustrates the child so hard—sometimes—he cries. Parents do not mean that it should hurt, but there are times when children won't listen to their superiors. Often it is with young people, like it is with the whole human race. Many times God's children, mankind, set their wills directly against God's will and they will not listen to him. Even though many human beings seem satisfied in destroying each other and the wonderful gifts with which God showers them, yet God forgives. "Man forgets and forgets; God gives and forgives."

### Your selfish self

If young Christians are entirely honest they will have to admit that they are greatly taken up with SELF—what *they* want. The more young people are concerned about self, the more young people tend to feel ill-used and unappreciated . . . and at once all blame goes on the other fellow. Parents don't appreciate them. Parents are too hard on them. The school and teachers give them a rough time; they never give them a chance; luck is always against them. Never will they admit to themselves that "the fault, dear Brutus, lies in ourselves and not in our stars, that we are slaves."

It is this SELF that turns young people into grumblers and complainers. Therefore, if we want to honestly be Christian then self no longer dare be in the center of the picture. The real Christian boy or girl will keep his mind open and alert for advice and promptings from his parents.

Christ made crystal clear what he expected of his followers. He offered no easy terms. He laid down clearly by what rules of life we might have joy. If we love Christ as our real leader we shall

obey him gladly, follow The Way, and cut out of our lives whatever he asks us not to do. We can ignore, but we cannot change his laws. No words can describe the happiness enjoyed by those young people to whom Christ and Christian parents mean everything.

### Reading for advisor

(The Luther League advisor may wish to recommend some of the following to selected parents.)

Block, Virginia Lee. "Conflicts of Adolescents with Their Mothers." *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*. 1937. Pages 193-206.

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Crow, Lester D. "Living with Teen Age Boys and Girls." *Educational Forum*. 1945. Pages 467-470.

Davis, Kingsley. "The Sociology of Parent-Youth Conflict." *American Sociological Review*. 1940. Pages 523-535.

Gardner, L. "An Analysis of Children's Attitudes toward Fathers." *Pedagogical Seminary and Journal of Genetic Psychology*. 1947. Pages 3-28.

Grayson, Alice Barr. *Do You Know Your Daughter?* New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc. 1938.

Hirshberg, Bernard. "Extrovert Mother and Introvert Child." *Hygeia*. 1946. Pages 426 plus.

Jurovsky, A. "The Relations of Older Children to Their Parents." *Pedagogical Seminary and Journal of Genetic Psychology*. 1948. Pages 85-100.

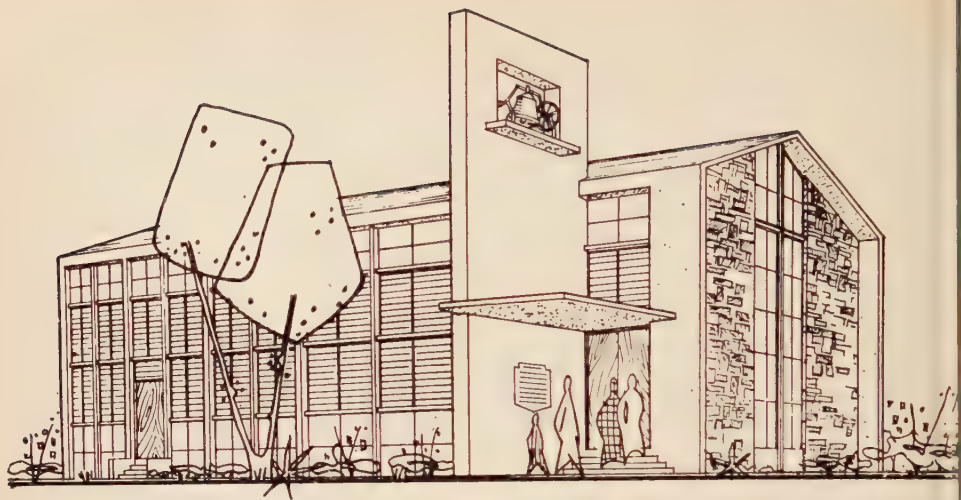
Mackenzie, Catherine. *Parent and Child*. New York: William Sloane Associates. 1949.

Malm, Marguerite and Jamison, Olis G. *Adolescence*. New York: McGraw-Hill. 1952.

Taylor, Katherine W. *Do Adolescents Need Parents?* New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts. 1938.

Pierce, W. G. *Youth Comes of Age*. New York: McGraw-Hill. 1948.

Teeter, Vera. *Guiding Students in the Development of Personality*. Chicago: Science Research Associates. 1943.



Architect's drawing of Redeemer Church, Puerto Nuevo, for which LLA is raising \$25,000

## League with a Spanish Accent

*Missionary Day --- January 30*

By Robert A. Beckstrom

**F**OR your imaginary trip to Puerto Rico you may use the material as it is presented here. Or you may wish to add some of your own ideas. So much the better.

As your worship center you could make a large sketch of the architect's drawing of the church at Puerto Nuevo. Such a sketch would not be difficult to make. Be sure to explain that this is the drawing of the church that the Lutheran League of America will help to build.

Another idea is to use the picture of Christ surrounded by the children from many lands as your worship center.

The skit has been written so that several leaguers can have parts. They should act out their parts.

### What's for recreation?

During the recreation period, some of the leaguers might work up a quartet using Spanish rhythm instruments. Prob-

ably some leaguer has castanets. There are also guiros, hollow gourds with carved grooves scratched with a dinner fork; gourd rattles; guitar; and sticks. Other songs and games may be used at the appropriate places in the program. "Cielito Lindo," and "El Rancho Grande" are typical Puerto Rican songs.

You will find a host of ideas for decorations, and games in the January LUTHERAN LIFE in the party section. These centers around a Puerto Rican fiesta.

Some leagues use a large piggy bank to receive the offering for Puerto Nuevo. They call it "Puerto Rico Porky."

### Questions

1. What is the name of the Lutheran church in Puerto Nuevo?
2. In what year was this church organized?
3. What is the name of the pastor? Of its missionary?
4. How many people can be seated in their present chapel?

## Buzz Session questions

1. Why does Redeemer Church, Puerto Nuevo, need a new building?
2. Why are we concerned about helping Lutherans in Puerto Nuevo?
3. Locate several Bible passages that support our reasons for helping them.
4. Would this be considered a home mission or a foreign mission project? Why?

## The Program

LEADER: Tonight we are journeying to the tropical island of Puerto Rico. This isn't just an ordinary sightseeing tour, however. Certainly we'll see some of the fascinating sights. But our purpose in going is a more challenging one. We shall visit our Luther League friends there, get to know them better, and see how we can help them. But before we board our Pan American plane for the trip, let us take a few moments for devotions.

HYMN: "O Zion Haste"—PSH 160

SCRIPTURE: Acts 16:6-10

PRAYER (*by leader*): Our Father in heaven, we thank you for the love you have shown to us through Jesus Christ. In response to this love we desire to give of ourselves for the furtherance of his kingdom. Just as Paul heard the call of the man of Macedonia, we have heard the call of Puerto Nuevo and we ask your help in answering the call. Tonight as we embark on our imaginary journey to learn more about these friends, inspire us that we may truly understand why it is so important that we serve you in this way. In Jesus name we pray. Amen.

LEADER: Now we had better get our seats on the plane for we are scheduled to leave in just five minutes. Hey there! Hurry up!

The stewardess is already showing the passengers how to inflate their life jackets in case of emergency. That's right, you take these seats behind the wing. We'll get those two near the cockpit. Let's see. The sign says "Fasten Seat Belt." Oh yes, here it is. I was sitting on it. Well, I guess we are ready to take off. Isn't this going to be wonderful?

STEWARD: (*Over loud-speaking system*) Good evening, ladies and gentle-

men. You are aboard Flight 523 bound for San Juan, Puerto Rico. This is a DC-6 tourist liner with cabin pressurized at the equivalent of 4,000 feet. We will fly at an altitude of 18,000 feet and are scheduled to arrive in San Juan in approximately six and one-half hours. Coffee will be served in 30 minutes. Thank you.

LEADER: Now he's saying the same thing again in Spanish. Doesn't it seem unusual to have people around us speaking a different language? Just think how it will be when we get there and everyone will be speaking Spanish! I wonder if anyone . . . (*Here the leader's voice trails off. One of the leaguers in front stands up and displays a card which reads "Later."*)

STEWARD: This is San Juan, Puerto Rico. We are happy to have had you as Pan American passengers and hope we can serve you again. Please watch your step as you leave the plane.

LEADER: At last we are here. Oh, look! Those people up on the flight deck are waving at us. Let's hurry over there. I hope we don't have to wait long to get our suitcases.

PASTOR ARBAUGH: Greetings, greetings. I'm Pastor Arbaugh, Latin Secretary of the Board of American Missions. Welcome to Puerto Rico. Here are some people I would like you to meet. This is Miss Esperanza Miranda, president of the Caribbean Luther League; Louis Torres (pronounce it Tor-race), former vice president, and pepito, his brother; Mr. Torres, father of these boys; and Mario Miranda, secretary of the league.

LUIS: Come with us. The cars are parked over this way. Can we help you with your suitcases?

MARIO: We've been looking forward to your coming. Did you have a nice trip?

(*These people leave and the narrator speaks from the back of the room.*)

NARRATOR: And so acquaintances are made and you go to the Torres home for a breakfast of ham, eggs, and Puerto Rican coffee. After breakfast you meet young Pastor Astacio (*pronounce it Abs-*

*tab-see-o*) who will serve as your translator.

Time passes and the next two days are crammed with thrilling tours of the island. You swim at white-sanded, palm-flanked, Luquillo (*pronounce it Lu-key-yo*) Beach, and feel the comforting warmth of its sparkling clear blue waters. A journey up the narrow, sharp-curved roads takes you to the beautiful mountain of El Yunque (*pronounce it Yun-kay*). There you see the rich green tropical foliage of the forest, sample the wild berries, and dangle your feet in the streams. From a point of vantage you also get a view of the countryside with its numerous sugar cane, pineapple and coconut plantations.

But perhaps even more beautiful than all this are the flamboyant trees with their almost perfectly horizontal limbs covered with deep red flowers. The sight of these magnificent trees is something that you will never forget.

Your trip leads you back to San Juan and into the very heart of the old-world city. You visit the 400-year-old Spanish fortress of El Morro and walk along the mighty wall surrounding the oldest part of the city. There you see the narrow streets of years gone by and the ornate buildings with their wrought iron balconies.

Continuing your tour of the city you see the modern magnificence of the Caribe (*pronounce it Car-ee-bee*) Hilton Hotel against an ancient background of decaying walls and sentry boxes. You ask yourself, "Can it be true that we are really seeing all this?" But your eyes drink in the beauty and fascination of it all and you are assured of its reality.

So your two days of sightseeing come to a close. And you find yourselves ready for the event for which you have come: The meeting with leaguers at Redeemer Church in Puerto Nuevo, a suburb of San Juan.

LEADER: (*from the front*) We go to the plaza and crowd ourselves into a publico and head for the little church. It's quite a squeeze—the 10 of us in this public station wagon. But for a dime

a ride I guess we can't expect the comfortable seating of a limousine. A death-defying ride through the congested traffic of the city brings us to the Puerto Nuevo bus stop. And we walk the half block to Redeemer Church.

Before we can even turn up the walk Pastor and Mrs. Torres are out to greet us. We feel the warmth of their genuine smiles so typical of the Puerto Rican people. And we know that we are among Christian friends.

Just as Mrs. Torres returns to the parsonage to continue preparing dinner for us Miss Frieda Hoh pulls up in her Chevrolet. We are glad to meet this missionary who has served so many faithful years. Pastor Torres tells us how much she has helped him in the work in Puerto Nuevo, and of her tireless efforts in the Sunday school of his other church, Monacillos (*pronounce it Moan-a-see-yo*). Since supper is not ready yet, we ask Pastor Torres and Miss Hoh to show us the church and to tell us about it.

PASTOR TORRES: You can easily see that our chapel is not even half the size of the parsonage. Yet it has to serve over one hundred Sunday school members. Of course, we can get only a part of that number inside the chapel itself. The rest of them meet here on the porch, in the parsonage, and in the garage. You see the building measures only about 20 by 25 feet.

MISS HOH: Come with me. I want you to see what it looks like on the inside. Sixty people can be seated with the chairs close together. Usually we have a number standing.

LEADER: Why, it looks as though the pastor could reach out and touch the people in the first row.

PASTOR TORRES: That's right. I can literally do that. We are really looking forward to the time that we will have a new building on this same spot.

LEADER: We are certainly glad that we can see these things ourselves so that we can tell our friends in Canada and the U. S. to raise even more than the \$25,000 they promised to give to help you build

our new church. Tell me. What will the new building be like?

MISS HOH: Here is the architect's drawing of what it will look like. It will be a concrete structure with huge venetian-blind-like windows on the sides. In front will be a glass window the height of the building. In the center of this window will be a cross which will be silhouetted at night.

PASTOR TORRES: That way people will be able to see the church both day and night from busy Roosevelt Boulevard, just half a block away. We want our church to be a testimony to Christ 24 hours a day.

NARRATOR: (*from the back*) You talk for quite some time and learn the history of the church since its organization in 1951. Then Mrs. Torres calls you in for supper and you sit down to a typical Puerto Rican meal—rice and beans with chicken, fried bananas, various vegetables prepared in unusual ways, topped off with that powerful coffee and delicious slices of fresh pineapple.

You don't finish eating until 15 minutes after the meeting was to have begun. But you don't worry about it because the leaguers are just beginning to arrive. You realize that the Puerto Ricans believe in fully enjoying life, and are not as subject to the anxieties of precise schedules as are state-siders.

First of the leaguers you meet is Miss Lydia de Sevilla (*pronounce it Say-vee-a*) who came to the 1953 LLA convention in behalf of Puerto Rico. She is the president of the league at Redeemer. The others are introduced to you as they arrive. When it seems that everyone is present the meeting begins. Devotions are partly in English and partly in Spanish because some of their young people don't understand English much better than we understand Spanish.

LEADER: After the devotions we divide into "buzz" groups for discussion and play a couple of their favorite games and sing their songs.

(*At this time, the leader divides the group into smaller "buzz" groups of three to 12 each for discussion of the*

*questions at the end of this article. Allow 10 minutes for this and have one person from each group report on its answers.*)

*The Missionary Day offering will be received.*

*Sing the hymn "Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life" (PSH 169)*

LEADER: Now our Puerto Rican friends have a song they want to teach us. It's the Spanish version of "John Jacob Jingleheimer Schmidt."

(*The following words and the pronunciation helps should have been written on a blackboard beforehand.*

Juan Pedro Pablo de la mar

Es me nombre si.

Y cuando yo me voy,

Me dicen lo que soy,

Juan Pedro Pablo de la mar.

Tra da da da da da da da

(*Pronunciation: De (day), mi (me), nombre (Nohm-bray), y (ee), me (may), dicen (dee-sen), que (kay).*

LEADER: Now we are going to play one of their favorite games. Most of us are familiar with games of this type. But we are going to play it their special way. It is called "Bus."

*Arrange two lines of chairs facing each other, the same number of chairs in each line. Arrange the lines about 10 feet apart and place a chair at one end between the lines. This is for the driver, the others for the passengers.*

*There must be no empty seats. All passengers seat themselves and listen while the driver calls out the stops. For example, Jefferson Boulevard, Main Street, Broad Avenue. Whenever the driver says "avenue," the passengers change sides, and the driver tries to find a seat on the bus. The person left without a seat is the new driver.*

Light refreshments may be served following the game.

The meeting may be closed with all joining hands in a fellowship circle. Place a burning candle in the center of the circle and turn the lights out. Ask the leaguers to offer sentence prayers. Close by singing one verse of "Blest Be the Tie that Binds."

Are you like the Pharisee who got 100 on the Quiz for a Christian---and flunked it? Or like the Publican who dared not even take the quiz but passed as a Christian with flying colors?

## How Do I Rate as a Christian?

By Philip A. R. Anttila

### Presenting the material

Use six leaguers and the pastor (or advisor) as follows:

Opening devotions with leaguer in charge.

Presentation of Part I by a leaguer (see hints).

Presentation of Part II by a leaguer (see hints).

Presentation of Part III by a leaguer and two others (see hints).

Presentation of Part IV by the pastor or advisor.

### Hints for those participating

#### HOW WE GOT THE NAME

Read the material in Unit I carefully.

Use a map or a blackboard sketch. Mark Antioch—where name Christian was given to followers of Jesus. Chart St. Paul's three missionary journeys (note first two began and ended in Antioch.)

Colored string and scotch tape can be used to mark journeys on a map, chalk

### Worship Suggestions

Hymn: "I Was Made a Christian"

*Parish School Hymnal* 126.

Scripture: Luke 18: 9-14.

Prayer: *PSH* No. 52, page 31.

Hymn: "God of Eternal Love" *PSH* 124.

Topic

Hymn: "Jesus Calls Us" *PSH* 204.

Offering

Prayer: *PSH* No. 16, page 25.

Lord's Prayer

Benediction.

on the blackboard.

Characterize the simplicity of early Christians (see material).

Illustrate types of persecution.

Emphasize our becoming Christians by baptism.

#### HOW DO YOU RATE AS A CHRISTIAN?

Distribute pencils and paper to leaguers.

Expand on questions as they are asked



Helps in questioning:

1. Do you play "hookey" from church activity? Does God always come first?
2. "Criss-cross my heart," "Honest to God" and the like are using God's name in vain.
3. Point out that every day is the Lord's day.
4. Include all superiors, elders, teachers, etc.
5. Evil thoughts of another included.
6. "Borrowing," "snitching," taking advantage—included.
7. Promises of confirmation and Lord's Supper.
8. Include gossip and half-truths.
9. Jealous of another's looks, clothing, money, etc.
10. Include Negroes, Japanese, Chinese, Jews, etc.

Everyone should fail the quiz.

Each question answered NO is worth 10 points—no half-credits permitted.

ARE YOU A PUBLICAN OR PHARISEE?

Two leaguers dramatize or pantomime the story. Emphasize conceit and humility.

How did they rate? See material.

By your score, which are you?

Who actually rates before God?

DO WE RATE AT ALL?

Summarize and conclude the topic.

a. Rate implies deserving or merit. We deserve nothing as quiz demonstrates.

b. Any self-examination shows our failures.

c. Emphasize God's love in face of our unworthiness. Realizing this, should produce lives of thanksgiving through worship and service.

d. Point out the significance of the confessional service before worship and communion. These are self-examinations showing how little we rate.

e. Don't leave the group feeling that all effort is worthless. Their deeds are expressions of their faith. Humility produces greater love.

### Questions to help

1. What is a Christian?
2. Do we earn this name?
3. How is salvation made ours? (Eph. 2: 8-9)
4. Which comes first—faith or deeds? Why?
5. What are the fruits of faith? (Gal. 5: 16-26)
6. Are these fruits possible without faith?
7. How do others know that you are a Christian?
8. Why should we do good deeds?
9. Name some things you should do that you are not doing.
10. Why is humility a part of the Christian life?

### The topic

The largest most southerly city of Turkey is *Antakiya*. A map will show you that it is squeezed between Syria-Lebanon and the Mediterranean Sea. The long finger of the island of Cypress points northwest to *Antakiya* about 100 miles away.

*Antakiya* is no longer important in world affairs. Three hundred years before Jesus' birth, and for hundreds of years after our Lord's death, resurrection, and ascension, it was important. It was the third largest city in the Roman Empire. It was called "The Queen of the East." Its official name was Antioch of Syria.

### How we got the name

This city—Antioch—was important in the history of the church. It was the birthplace of foreign mission work. From Antioch, St. Paul began and ended his first two missionary journeys. It served as his home base.

Antioch was important for another reason, too. It was in Antioch that the followers of Jesus were first called Christians. (Acts 11:26) The followers of Jesus didn't choose the name for themselves. It was given to them by their enemies in about A.D. 43. It was given in mockery of the way of life the followers of Jesus led. It was spoken in sneering tones by the heathens of that day.

The name did not become popular quickly. It is mentioned only twice after it was first given. (Acts 26:28, I Peter 4:16) Yet it was accepted by the early followers. In bearing that name they brought glory to it even at the cost of horrible persecution. Today 700 million people call themselves Christians.

The kingdom of God meant, to the early Christian, that God was the Father of all mankind. Each person was to be considered as a child of God; therefore, each child of God should love God and his neighbor. Everyone whom these early Christians could help was his neighbor. Such love was not known by men of that day. Those were crude and cruel days. Man was to repent with sorrow for sin and in trust turn to God. God would forgive his sins and he in turn was to forgive others. This life of faith would mark him as Christian. God would bless him in this life and in the world to come. These were the things that Jesus taught. The early Christian believed these teach-

ings because he believed that Jesus was the Son of God.

Each person taking upon himself this new way of life was set apart by baptism. In baptism he was made a Christian. Baptism meant forgiveness of sins and the deliverance from death and the devil. Baptism conferred everlasting salvation to all who believed the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Christians today believe this same gospel. Very early in life we are made Christians by baptism. In confirmation we make a public confession of the faith made ours in baptism. In baptism you become a member of Christ's mighty army which 1,911 years ago, was first called Christian in Antioch of Syria.

### How do you rate as a Christian?

Very often in some of our popular magazines we find little quizzes about "How Do You Rate as a Cook" . . . "Testing Your Word Power" . . . and "How Do You Rate On Current Affairs?" After you have answered the questions, you turn to another page and check your score. Anything below 70 is poor. We are very often embarrassed with our score. On the other hand, if we make 100 we feel rather proud of ourselves and we begin to believe we are pretty smart.

In order that we might rate ourselves as Christians, let's have a quiz right now. Allow yourself 10 points for every question you can answer "No".

Yes No

1. Do you ever permit anything to come first in your life outside of God? — —
2. Do you ever take God's name in vain? — —
3. Do you ever misuse the day of the Lord? — —
4. Do you ever disobey the better judgment and advice of your parents or elders? — —
5. Do you ever say of anyone . . . "I hate him—I don't like him"? — —
6. Do you ever take even the smallest thing that doesn't belong to you without per-

	mission or the knowledge of its owner?	—	—
7.	Do you ever break a promise?	—	—
8.	Do you ever talk about another person behind his back?	—	—
9.	Do you ever become even a little bit jealous of another's possessions?	—	—
10.	Do you at all times love your fellow man as yourself?	—	—

### Are you a Publican or a Pharisee?

If you scored 100 in the quiz you qualify for membership in the ranks of the Pharisees. If you failed the quiz and realize, as a result of this self-examination, how far short of fulfilling God's law you fall, then you have hope.

Do you remember the story about the Publican and the Pharisee? It was read as part of the opening devotions. The Pharisee was quite proud of himself. He passed his own quiz with flying colors. He graded his own report card and made an "A" in every effort. Look at his score.

		Yes	No
Are you better than other men?	20	—	
Are you honest in all things?	20	—	
Are you more righteous than the Publican?	20	—	
Do you observe all the rules of the church?	20	—	
Are you a good tither? (tenth of income to the church)	20	—	
	—	—	
Total	100	—	

He gave himself 20 points credit for his answers and his total score was 100. What was going on in his mind? Look at my report card, God. I'm pretty good, I deserve your blessing."

Now the Publican didn't even give himself a quiz. When he thought of his life he didn't dare to go to the altar to pray. He stood afar off. He wouldn't so much as lift his eyes to God because he had failed in every test of loyalty. All he

could do was strike his hands against his chest and cry out, "O my God, please, please forgive me for I am a sinner." You see—he knew that he had failed every test.

But in Jesus' eyes he had passed because he was humble. He knew that he was a sinner and his only hope was in God's mercy. When Jesus graded the report cards he gave the highest rating to the Publican. He said, "Everyone that exalts himself shall be brought low, and he who is humble shall be uplifted."

### Do we rate at all?

No, we don't rate as Christians. Any test we make of ourselves in the light of God's law is bound to end in failure. The great apostle Paul—one of those first called Christian in Antioch—said, "For I am least of the apostles, not fit to be called an apostle." (I Corinthians 15:9) And again when he tested himself he said, "For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. . . . For I know that nothing good dwells within me." (Romans 7:18 ff) Paul teaches, even as the church does, that God does not love us because we rate his love or because we deserve it. No, it is just the opposite. We rate only because God loves us. "No one does good, not even one." (Romans 3:12) Luther says, "We are not loved because we are lovely. . . . We are lovely because we are loved."

Any self-examination will show us how weak we are as Christians. Any self-examination will show us how little we deserve from God. Yet he loves us so much that he gives us his Son that "whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16)

Christians are humble people. We have to be humble when we realize that even though we are sinners God loves us. Trusting in God's promises, living and growing in faith, trying to do his will, serving others, and living in Christian love, is our response to his love. Weak as our efforts may be, knowing that we do not rate very well, we can always be assured by Jesus' words, "Him that comes to me I will not cast out."

Don't shudder the next time you're asked to give a league topic. Just learn these speech pointers.

## It's Fun to Make a Speech

*By Elizabeth Fenner*

JANE DARBY'S citizenship teacher at Dwight High asked her to give a short talk before the class. Her subject was to be Branchville, the town in which they lived. Reluctantly Jane accepted the assignment. The thought of standing in front of a group of people to speak—even though it was just her classmates—terrified Jane.

At the Darby dinner table that evening Jane told her parents about the assignment. "I'm so scared. I know I can't do it," she said.

"You know," said Mr. Darby, "that reminds me of the first time I had to give a speech. It was for the Rotary Club. I was upset about that job just as you are about yours, Jane. But after I'd prepared and given the speech I realized what an interesting experience it had been. You remember Mr. Roberts, Jane," her father continued. "He gave me some hints on speechmaking that I put to good use for my talk. Maybe they'll help you, too."

These are some of the pointers that Jane's father gave her.

The subject for your talk is very important. Jane's assignment had already included the subject—her town. When you pick the subject, however, choose one that will interest your whole audience.

If the audience, for instance, will be teen-agers a subject in which you are interested will probably hold their attention, too. Try making a list of the things

you talked about with your friends during the past week. See which ones would be suitable for a formal talk.

If you're speaking to classmates probably a subject connected with the school would be best, like school clubs, the football team, studies, or a problem you and school faces. Or if it's a group of Lutheran leaguers talk about how to live a Christian life, or how to improve the league program, or the life of Martin Luther.

On the other hand, some of your audience may not have had the same experiences as you. And because you've done something different the group would like to hear you talk about it. Perhaps you were born in a foreign country. Or you've lived in another part of the United States or Canada. Maybe you recently had an unusual experience.

No matter what your final choice will be, however, it should first interest you. If you like the subject you'll be able to talk about it with more enthusiasm.

### Dig for background

After the subject has been decided upon the next step is to find out all you can about it. To be interesting you've got to be informed about your subject.

In Jane's case she interviewed the mayor of Branchville for information. Then she visited the library and searched through newspapers and scrapbooks for a history of the town. Jane had a lot of fun talking to old-time residents of the community. She visited churches, firehouses, and schools. And she even attended some meetings of the civic organi-

tations. All during this time she took notes to refer to when she prepared her talk.

After gathering all the information you possibly can, write down just what your topic is to be and its purpose. Sum up in one or two sentences the main idea that you'll want to bring out in the speech.

Jane's main idea was "The town of Branchville offers many fine opportunities and advantages for its residents."

Now assemble your ideas and list them in order. Make a simple outline by dividing the main theme of your talk into smaller topics. Then arrange the topics in a good order that will get your points across. The more detailed your outline is, and the more you think about it, the better your speech will be.

Choose a good opening sentence so you'll gain the attention of your audience from the very beginning. A question, a challenge, or a funny story might serve as an attention-getter. Along with the outline you may wish to write out your speech to be sure your idea is developed in a good order.

Study your outline thoroughly until you're familiar with all the points. As you think of just how you will give your talk, keep in mind that a good speech is a series of pictures. If you describe the incidents well your listeners will be able easily to imagine the event.

Another hint—be specific. "The population of Branchville increased by 4,872 from 1940 to 1950" is far more effective than "The population of Branchville has grown in the past several years."

### Practice makes perfect

Now that you know the facts about your subject it's time to get on your feet and practice the speech. Be sure your voice will be clear and audible to your listeners. You will probably have to speak louder than your normal conversational one. But don't screech or boom. Speak distinctly and naturally. If possible, record your talk. Then play back the tape, listening for defects in your speech.

If a tape recorder isn't available, ask

your family to serve as an audience. Of course, you can always talk to your image in a mirror.

Practice your talk several times. There's no substitute for oral rehearsals. And while you're rehearsing you might time the speech. Don't try to memorize what you want to say because if you forget one sentence you'll be lost. But if you plan to repeat a quotation word for word or give exact figures, jot the information down on a small card—if you don't trust these to memory.

You've rehearsed the speech several

### To the leader

Use the information in the topic to help you present this subject to your league. Try following the directions in the topic closely as you prepare your material on how to give a talk. Then your group will not only hear how to make a speech, but they will be able to see you carry out the very instructions you are describing. It will help to write your key ideas on a blackboard, too.

You will find more material about giving a talk in a booklet called *You Can Talk Better*, by C. Van Riper. It costs just 50c. Order it from Science Research Associates, 57 West Grand Avenue, Chicago 10, Ill.

After you present your topic you might ask your group to name subjects that interest them. Some leaguers might mention their hobbies, for instance. Others might suggest a subject like "How to Improve Our League." Then ask each member to prepare a short talk in 10 minutes about one of the subjects mentioned. Have paper and pencils on hand so that they can outline their talks. One by one let the leaguers present them. After each one, the group might give suggestions and comments.

times, and you're ready for the big moment—facing the audience. You may think this is the hardest part of all. But it won't be if you've followed instructions and prepared well. Pray to God for guidance and confidence before you begin.

A sea of faces

No doubt all those faces looking at you will give you butterflies in your stomach. So before you speak stop just a minute to look over the audience. Those folk aren't waiting for you to make a mistake, as you may think. Some of them have probably had the same experience as you, and will be very sympathetic with you. If you can be fairly relaxed before the group you will put them at ease, too.

But suppose the unexpected should happen: You forget a word or an idea. What then? Just pause a minute. Think back to your rehearsals to refresh your memory. If the idea is completely lost just continue on with the next thought. No one will criticize you for pausing to

catch your breath. And they may not even suspect you've omitted part of your talk.

Don't *look* for the unexpected though. Instead keep your mind alert! Concentrate on what you're saying. Relax, and you will discover that giving speeches can be fun.

Worship Service

Hymn: "Yield Not to Temptation" 222  
(CYH)

Psalm 121

Scripture: Matthew 5: 13-16

Prayer:

"O Thou God of those heroes of the past, who 'through faith wrought righteous,' help us to remember that thou art our helper today, and that if we truly have faith in thee, nothing shall be impossible unto us." In the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Offering

Hymn: "My Faith Looks Up to Thee" 200  
(CYH)

Bible readings

Romans 12:6

Matthew 6:34

Revelations 3:20

Checklist for a Better Speech

WHAT TO DO		BUT CHECK UP	
		Yes	No
1. Pick your topic.	Does it interest you?	—	—
	Will it interest your audience?	—	—
2. Gather your information.	Have you explored all sources?	—	—
3. Arrange the important ideas into an outline.	Is the outline logical?	—	—
	Will your listeners be able to follow you?	—	—
4. Figure out (1) the opening and (2) the closing sentences.	Will (1) capture audience interest?	—	—
	Will (2) leave a lasting impression?	—	—
5. Make notes of important points.	Are important figures or dates written down?	—	—
6. Practice the speech.	Are the important ideas fixed in your mind?	—	—
7. Make the speech.	Will you talk clearly and naturally?	—	—

Reprinted from "You Can Talk Better."

Some sins are silent . . . others shout, "You're guilty!"

## Do You Have Sins to Confess?

By Herbert N. Gibney

### You will need

Bibles, one copy for each leaguer; a blackboard; *Common Service Books*, one per leaguer; a pile of newspapers; several pairs of scissors; jars of paste; and several large sheets of paper on which you have written the key ideas of the Ten Commandments. Beside each commandment leave enough space so that each group can paste several news items clipped from the newspapers.

### Start interestingly

To introduce the topic you might read the confession of sins on pages 9 and 10 of the *Common Service Book*. You, as the leader, could read the part that the pastor speaks in the worship service, and let the leaguers respond. Then explain to the group why the confession comes at the beginning of the church's worship. The section of the topic entitled "Begin with confession" will help you understand this.

You could tackle next just what is meant by sin. To get across the idea of "original sin" try a dramatic presentation. For instance, you could use puppets to tell the story of Adam and Eve. (It's found in Genesis 2: 15 to 3: 24.) Or, in place of puppets, ask several leaguers to read the story as a play. One could be the narrator, another Adam, another Eve, and another could read God's words. The section "Straight from Adam" then has something to say.

Next talk about the actual sins that we all commit. (See section entitled

"Silent Sins" in the topic.) Now let the group name several sins committed by thinking evil thoughts, doing a wrong deed, or saying something that's wrong. If you have a blackboard you might list these on the board under the titles "Thought," "Word," and "Deed."

Then let the group discuss the following Bible passages, trying to discover which ones speak about original sin and which of actual sin. Psalm 51; Romans 5:12; Ephesians 4:25-29; Romans 7:18-25; Galatians 5:16-24; and I John 1:8-10. Since some of the passages are long, it will probably be better for each leaguer to read the selections silently. Then begin the discussion.

Divide your league into small groups. Distribute to each group a pile of newspapers and a copy of the chart you have prepared on the Ten Commandments. Explain to the group that they are to cut out news items from the papers showing ways that people have broken the commandments. These they should paste on the sheet beside the commandment that is broken.

When each group has collected stories concerning as many commandments as they can, let them explain their chart to the league. Then ask the league to discuss how you can best keep each commandment.

### For your worship

SCRIPTURE: Genesis 3:1-15.

HYMNS: 268, 210, 218 (*Parish School Hymnal*)

PSALM: 51, 130, or 32

PRAYERS: 40, 41, and 38 (*Parish School Hymnal*, page 29)



We must look into the very depths of our souls in settling our differences with God.

"MY DAUGHTER doesn't need to go to church every week," Mrs. Pierce exclaimed angrily. "After all, Pastor Wagner, Ellie's only a young girl. She doesn't do many things that are wrong."

Pastor Wagner shifted in his chair. He had come to the Pierces to try to persuade Mrs. Pierce to take her family to church more often. Last year they had gone twice—and Ellie had just been confirmed.

"Don't you think, Mrs. Pierce," he began.

But Mrs. Pierce interrupted. "And about taking communion every month, why we don't need it as often as that."

"Well," said Pastor Wagner, "all people are selfish—even Ellie, and you and I. We constantly commit sins against God and against our neighbors, and friends, and family. Many times we don't realize how selfish we are. But because we do sin we need to worship and take communion regularly."

"Are you trying to tell me, Pastor Wagner, that I'm not a good woman and that Ellie's a bad girl? Why," said Mrs. Pierce, "I try to be good. I'm good to my family. I don't have fights with my neighbors. And when you tell me that I'm doing wrong, sinning, well, I just don't like being put in the same class with a bunch of bums."

Although he spent an hour in the Pierce home, Pastor Wagner didn't get very far. Mrs. Pierce just could not understand how much it meant to have a saviour, Jesus Christ. Nor could she see that it was important to go to church where she could be assured of forgiveness and help in making over her life.

### Begin with confession

The Lutheran church has always emphasized that we do have many sins to confess to God. At the very beginning of our Sunday service comes a part called "The Confession of Sins." Have you ever wondered why we start our service this way? Why not end with confession or use it in the middle?

Well, suppose two people had an argument, and they parted bad friends. Then suppose both were invited to a party. Do you think they would have a good time there? Probably not. Probably they would be avoiding each other and spending a good deal of their time casting sly glances to see if the other were around. To have a good time at the party they would have to settle their differences first.

Now all week long we have been breaking God's commandments. We have been sinning against him. If we go to church and try to take part in the service with these sins between us and God we won't really benefit from the service. We'll be like the two enemies at the party. That's why we settle our differences with God through the confession of sins at the beginning of the service.

In this portion of the service there is a paragraph that the pastor reads while facing the altar. You'll find it on page 10 of the *Common Service Book*. Although the pastor reads it by himself he is making this statement to God for the whole congregation. Here is part of it. "Almighty God, our Maker and Redeemer, we poor sinners confess unto thee that we are by nature sinful and unclean, and that we have sinned against thee by thought, word, and deed."

We confess two types of sin in this statement. Let's look at them.

### Straight from Adam

First we admit that "we are by nature sinful and unclean." This is often called original sin. It means that we are all a part of the human family. From the time Adam and Eve sinned this human, sinful nature has been passed down from one generation to another. It's just like inheriting the color of your eyes, the shape of your nose, and the straightness or curliness of your hair. This sinful nature causes us to do things that are wrong, to break God's laws.

Suppose you saw a boy with little red splotches on his face and arms. If he said these marks itched and that he felt sick in his stomach, you would probably figure that he had measles. But measles is not the red spots. Measles is a disease that causes the red spots. These spots are only a symptom of the disease. So the things we do which are sins are only the symptom of a disease inside of us—our sinful nature.

The sinful nature of all people can be seen in the attitude we have toward all of life. When we are really honest with ourselves we must admit that we always think of ourselves first. I am more important to myself than anyone else. Actually, God should be more important to me. So we take the place of God in our lives very often.

That's what Adam and Eve did. They thought they could be as smart and as important as God. Man's attitude ever since has been one of rebelling against God and trying to run things to suit himself. In the center of sin there is the letter I, like this, **I**n. That's the trouble.

### Silent sins

This way of looking at things leads all of us to commit sins. Here we come to the second part of our confession, where we admit that we sin "by thought, word and deed." To kill someone is sinful. But to a Christian to even consider killing a person or to hurt a person by the words we say is just as sinful. Look up what Jesus said about this in Matthew 5:21,22.

To tell something about another per-

son which is untrue is a sin. But if you are in a group and someone else tells a lie about another person and you keep silent that is also sin. You sinned because you didn't speak and correct the lie.

To use God's name to curse or swear is wrong. Sometimes we do not curse, yet we use God's name in vain. If we say our prayers to God without thinking of what we are saying, as often happens with the Lord's Prayer, for instance, we are also committing sin.

It is wrong to take a man's wife away from him. We call this adultery and the sixth commandment forbids it. But to think impure thoughts or words also breaks this commandment. Read what Jesus says of this in Matthew 5:27, 28.

If we carefully study the Ten Commandments and Dr. Martin Luther's explanations of them in the catechism, we will see more clearly how we not only do things which are sinful but how we think and say things that are sinful. There are sins of commission and sins of omission. To actually do something wrong is a sin of commission. We really commit it or do it. But to fail to do something which we should do is a sin of omission.

That is we omit or leave out something we should do. Here is a little poem which teaches this.

"I never cut my neighbor's throat;  
My neighbor's gold I never stole.  
I never spoiled his house or land;  
But God have mercy on my soul!  
For I am haunted night and day  
By all the deeds I have not done."

Investing money in drilling an oil well is a big deal. Before the company actually decides to drill it makes tests of the land. Specimens of the rock in that land carefully analyzed in a laboratory. Scientists study the slope of the land and collect a huge amount of data.

Christians ought to be just as careful in examining their lives. We cannot be content with just looking on the surface to see if we have been doing things we should not. We have to probe into the very depths of our souls. When we do we shall see that we do have sins to confess.

We shall also appreciate much more how wonderful it is to have a Saviour in Jesus Christ. The more we realize our own sinfulness, the more fervently we can sing, "Beautiful Saviour."

\* \* \*

### Try this

Write these words in the correct blank spaces of the paragraph below:

line	all	law
sin	sufficient	everyone
link	keep	perfectly
God	no one	whole
Christ	one	

Our God requires that we keep his law (1)———. (2)——— can do so because (3)——— is a sinner. Most men think it is (4)——— merely to do what is right. They are wrong. Even the best of men cannot (5)——— God's (6)——— perfectly. God says, "Whosoever shall keep the (7)——— law and yet offend in (8)——— point, he is guilty of (9)———." Just as one crude (10)——— will spoil a picture and one broken (11)——— will ruin a chain, so one (12)——— makes us unfit to face (13)——— in our own righteousness. We are forgiven not by our own good deeds, but through (14)———, who has kept the law for us and died for our sins.

CORRECT ANSWERS: (1) perfectly; (2) no one; (3) everyone; (4) sufficient; (5) keep; (6) law; (7) whole; (8) one; (9) all; (10) line; (11) link; (12) sin; (13) God; (14) Christ

God's good news can't be bottled up. Once you know Jesus Christ you will want to share him.

## Too Good to Keep

By Arthur E. M. Yeagy

### Begin early

Several weeks in advance of the date of the topic ask someone to prepare for the part of Jim Smith and to read the introductory paragraphs. Also make sure that persons to serve on the panel have been contacted and that they will acquaint themselves with their parts.

Your own preparation should include ordering from the Luther League of America, 1228 Spruce St., Philadelphia 3, Pa., the new pamphlet "Evangelism Is Your 'Big Job' ". It costs 10 cents and is worth much more. It can make the difference between your leading a slap-dash and an intelligent topic, for it tells you how to direct a program of evangelism among youth.

How about asking your pastor or advisor to give a brief report on one of the recent books on evangelism, such as *Effective Evangelism* by George Sweazy or *The Practice of Evangelism* by Bryan Green? Ever consider buying a book and presenting it to the pastor or advisor?

### Presenting the topic

Have ready a table with several chairs around it, also Bible with a copy of Luther's *Catechism* on each. When the in-

troduction is finished by "Jim Smith" ask members of the panel to take their places and proceed.

At the conclusion of the topic have the pastor or lay adult advisor lead in comments and discussion. Ask him to report on the action of the 1954 convention of the United Lutheran Church at Toronto concerning evangelism, and about the 1956-57 church-wide emphasis on evangelism. (Warn him at least a week ahead of time that you will do this.) By all means, he should report on what your congregation is doing about evangelism and should outline the ways that young people can participate as "partners" in the program.

Conclude the topic with the true-false test.

### Worship outline

#### QUIET MUSIC

HYMN: "Lord, Speak to Me" *Christian Youth Hymnal* 260

PSALM 24 and GLORIA PATRI

SCRIPTURE: Acts 4: 13-20

OFFERING (Quiet music)

HYMN: "O Zion, Haste" *CYH* 266

TOPIC PRESENTATION

COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION

HYMN: "We've a Story to Tell to the Nations" *CYH* 268

LUTHER LEAGUE BENEDICTION



Young people of Falls City, Nebraska, convinced more than one teen-ager to attend church and Luther League during a recent visitation. Period of instruction preceded the calling.

### The topic

I'm Jim Smith, reporting on the Luther League meeting we had at Trinity Church last Sunday evening. We talked about evangelism. It happened this way. Several weeks ago our president announced that the Luther League of America had a new guide on evangelism for leaguers, and suggested we send for several copies. He said it was called "Evangelism Is Your 'Big Job'."

That seemed harmless enough until Jerry Manville let out a snort and started quoting his Uncle Bill.

"Why is our Luther League making such a fuss about evangelism? Uncle Bill says it doesn't belong in the Lutheran church. He says the mourner's bench and

the sawdust trail may go in some groups but not among Lutherans. Why should we bother with it?"

I thought we were in for a wrangle right then and there. But I needn't have feared, because Pastor Braun was there. He is always level-headed and might be clever, too.

"Say Jerry, that is a good question," he came right back. "Why should Lutherans bother with evangelism? And why should it be a subject for leaguers? Let's have a panel discussion on it soon."

The league took to that idea fast, and it's the panel I'm reporting on now.

On the panel were:

Pastor Braun  
Jerry Manville

Sue Emmert, league evangelism secretary

Jim Smith (myself), moderator

MODERATOR: We are talking about evangelism this evening. Jerry, will you begin by telling us why you think evangelism doesn't belong in the Lutheran church?

JERRY: The way Uncle Bill explained to me, evangelism is a way of getting people all worked up and weepy about how bad they have been. They raise their hands and sign papers, and then forget about it until another campaign comes along.

SUE: But evangelism in the Lutheran church means more than that. I'm sure the word does belong, because we call ourselves an *Evangelical* Lutheran church.

MODERATOR: Pastor, here is where you come in. What about evangelism? What place does it have in the Lutheran church?

PASTOR: Yes, evangelism is a very important word for us. It is important for the same reasons that make it important for all Christians. As Jerry has pointed, some practises and ideas have gotten tied up with it that have caused some people to shy away from it, or to say that it is not for the Lutheran church. Sometimes, too, the Lutheran church has suffered because of this turning away.

Let's start with the word "evangelism" itself. It comes from two Greek words meaning "good news."

JERRY: But Pastor, didn't you say once that is what "gospel" means?

PASTOR: That is right, Jerry. "Gospel" is an Anglo-Saxon word meaning "God's story," or "good story"—good news! Now, what is the natural thing to do when you have some good news?

SUE: Why, you want to tell about it, of course.

PASTOR: Yes indeed! And if the news is good enough, you want to tell it with all the power to persuade that you have. You want to shout it. You are so glad you just can't keep it to yourself. You know someone else will be made happy by hearing it.

MODERATOR: But what has this to do with evangelism.

PASTOR: Evangelism is the telling of the good news, the best news ever, God's good news about Jesus! This good news makes people happy, and enables them to stay happy and lead happy, useful lives.

JERRY: Then that is a different idea about evangelism than what I had, isn't it?

PASTOR: Yes, it is. You see, there are

### True-False Quiz

1. ( ) The chief purpose of evangelism is to make people sorry for their sins.
2. ( ) Preaching missions are part of the church's program of evangelism.
3. ( ) The teachings of Jesus offer no material for evangelism.
4. ( ) The Book of Acts contains a number of passages relating to evangelism.
5. ( ) The word "evangelism" comes from two Greek words meaning "good news."
6. ( ) John 3:16 is the heart of the good news of which our evangelism speaks.
7. ( ) Luther leaguers are too young to take any part in evangelism.
8. ( ) We should invite other young people to share our social activities but keep the devotional meetings for our own group.
9. ( ) The United Lutheran Church is planning a special emphasis on evangelism in the next few years.
10. ( ) The Lutheran church is opposed to the idea of evangelism.

#### ANSWERS:

- |     |      |
|-----|------|
| 1—F | 6—T  |
| 2—T | 7—F  |
| 3—F | 8—F  |
| 4—T | 9—T  |
| 5—T | 10—F |

people who have never heard of John 3:16, for instance. Will you read it, Jim? (Pause, while Jim, the moderator, reads.) And there are many who have heard of it but have never really grasped what it means. It is everybody's business to get that news around. And that includes us Lutherans, too.

What you have been hearing about, Jerry, isn't really evangelism at all. At least it doesn't sound like good news to a lot of people. It isn't the call of a loving, caring God and Saviour, but the threat of an angry God. Now we ought to remember that the sinner who rejects God is in a pretty sorry state. There is a hell, and sin results in separation and suffering. But God's first approach is the loving one, not the threatening one.

MODERATOR: Pastor, you said the Lutheran church has suffered because of some wrong ideas about evangelism. How is that possible?

PASTOR: Sometimes pastors and congregations have hesitated to engage in evangelism, or to mention the word, because they thought they'd be expected to limit themselves to the kind Jerry was objecting to. So they have drawn into a kind of shell and have kept the good news to themselves.

They have missed the happy experience of telling those who haven't heard the story. Their members haven't had the thrill of asking others to share their Christian faith, of seeing the way the love of Jesus can change worried, guilty lives to free, forgiven lives. They have acted as if they had only misery to share, when it is "Joy to the World" they had to share.

SUE: Are there any Bible passages that tell about evangelism?

PASTOR: Yes there are. I'll mention one. You take your Bibles and see if you can each find one. Luke 10:1-24 tells of Jesus appointing 70 disciples to go out and tell the good news.

JERRY: And here is Matthew 28:19-20. I've always liked that. But I never thought of it before as having something to do with evangelism.

SUE: I like Matthew 5:13-16, "Let

your light so shine before men." That evangelism too. But it isn't the kind you were objecting to, is it, Jerry?

MODERATOR: How about Acts 1: That includes just about all people at all places, doesn't it?

PASTOR: Yes, those are all good passages. The one from Acts relates the Holy Spirit to evangelism. When a Christian is telling the good news he is not working alone but the Holy Spirit is supplying the power and is working through him.

Now turn to your *Catechism*. Read Luther's meaning of the third article of the Creed. God through the Holy Spirit is evangelist too?

MODERATOR: (Reads the meaning of the third Article.) Yes, and God wants us to do what he is doing. We are to "work together with him!"

SUE: Pastor, do you think Lutheran leaguers should be in on this too? Should evangelism be only for the grown-ups?

PASTOR: Why shouldn't you tell the good news too? You are never too young for it. If you had good news about anything else you wouldn't sit by and wait for the older people to pass the word around. You'd be right in there, "first with the mostest," to coin a phrase.

MODERATOR: But what can our leaguers do?

PASTOR: You can start by using the evangelism guide you talked about the other week "Evangelism Is Your 'Full Time Job,'" You can put a special spot light on topics that make it clear that Christians have the very best "good news." You can go out two by two as leaguers and visit other young people and ask them to come and share the league meetings, and church services, to sing about and hear the gospel.

You can select several leaguers to take part in the congregation's program of evangelism. And best of all, remember that everything about a live-wire church and a live-wire league is good news about God's good news.

JERRY: Count us leaguers in, Pastor. I'm sure we're all for it.

Communist youth, drilled in party teachings, sneer at American youth who are unable to meet point by point the Communist arguments.

## What Would You Say to a Communist?

By Inez Seagle

THIS program is so extremely important to your group that you will want to use every trick in the book to get its message across. But don't let the subject scare you. All you need are a few props and a little practice to put on an intensely dramatic program.

### Simple setting

Props: A couple of chairs, and one old, battered table. A record player, and a few records of sombre music. For lighting effect, use a spotlight. If, however, one is not available, a flashlight with a powerful beam will do as well.

Using an idea from the book *Darkness at Noon* by Arthur Koestler, let your program be presented in a darkened room representing a cell somewhere behind the Iron or Bamboo Curtain. Seat a leaguer behind the old table. He plays the part of "Comrade." Opposite him seat a leaguer representing the American or Canadian. Arrange the spotlight so that it can be thrown alternately on "Comrade" and the American.

The darker your room is the greater dramatic effect you will achieve with the spotlight or flashlight.

One person is the narrator who reads the lines as if the American or Canadian were giving his testimony to the Communist. The narrator should be out of sight and should use as little light as possible.

Or you might adapt the program as a courtroom scene somewhere in the Russian zone. In this case, two leaguers representing a Communist and an American or Canadian would be questioned. The material in the topic will guide your line of questioning.

As a part of either presentation, a review of Koestler's book would certainly be worthwhile.

### The audience goes to work

After the presentation let the group discuss the statement "The end justifies the means." Use concrete examples to show just what it does mean.

Let the whole group write a Communist Creed. It might, for instance, begin "I believe in Malinkov . . . ruler of the world whose kingdom shall come . . ." Then compare this creed with the Apostle's Creed.

Secure a large map of the world, and let members of the league cover the countries with black that are under the rule of the Communists. Then in a recent atlas find statistics on the population of each country that the Communists control. Figure what percentage of the total world's population (approximately 2,-

Aim of this topic is to help you understand what a Communist believes, and what a Christian believes.

170,000,000) is under the domination of Communism.

Let a leaguer gather data on the life of young Paul Mackensen, a Lutheran missionary who was taken as a hostage behind the Bamboo Curtain in China. Write to the Board of Foreign Missions, 231 Madison Avenue, New York 16, New York, for material. Use this presentation to show that a Christian often has to witness to his faith before a Communist.

Or you might have a "Reporters Report to the League" session. Using the "buzz session" method, divide your league into small units. Ask each unit to select a reporter. Provide the units with copies of fairly recent newspapers and back issues of "The Lutheran." The idea is that each unit scours the papers and magazines, collecting accounts of what is happening in countries behind the Iron Curtain. After the groups have checked through the publications, each reporter reports to the league what his group uncovered.

### To plan your worship

*Hymns:* "O Beautiful for Spacious Skies" 365 *PSH*; "Lead on, O King Eternal" 290 *PSH*; "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty" 248 *PSH*; "My Country, 'Tis of Thee" 361 *PSH*, or "Faith of Our Fathers" 139 *PSH*.

*Suggested Bible readings:* I Timothy 6: 12-17, 20; Galatians 5:12-15; Colossians 2:8-15; Genesis 1:1-3, 27-31; Exodus 20:3-7; Philippians 3:20; Ephesians 6:10-17; or Colossians 3:12-18.

*As for prayer:* This is one time when you need the Lord's prayer. Let the general prayer on page 19, *Common Service Book*, be read in unison. Write one of your own. Or let the group suggest ideas to be put into the prayer of the leader.

### The topic

(*Spotlight on Communist.*)

In a small, dirty prison cell a man paces back and forth. He is a Communist. One by one the events of the past crowd into his already churning brain. He thinks

of the years spent in the service of his country. He thinks of his beautiful wife who was executed because she interfered with the Communist party. And he thinks of his own imprisonment by his fellow Communists. He is tortured by doubts.

What will happen to this man? Will he be released? No. The Communists have so shackled his mind that he will sign a false confession. He will die believing that it is all for the good of the cause.

Poor, misguided Comrade. To give so much to so little!

These events are graphically portrayed in a book *Darkness at Noon* by Arthur Koesteler. Are they just fiction? Hear him say? Fact?

In 1947 Jan Masaryk, great Czech leader, mysteriously came to his death. A few days before his "accident" he met a friend on the street. To his friend Masaryk remarked, "The Communists have outdone us. They have a strong program. They work hard. And, above all else, they have strong convictions."

Elton Trueblood has said that in all history only three movements have completely captivated men's minds and hearts: Christianity, Nazi-ism, and Communism. And in our day and age it is the Communist cause. Like a creeping paralysis the cause of the Comrades spreads across the globe.

(*Spotlight on American.*)

European youth are highly critical of us because we cannot always say what we believe. Knock on the door of a Communist. He can tell you point by point what he thinks.

What would I say to a Communist? Plenty! In the style advocated by scripture—ready to answer the questions that are put to us.

(*Spotlight swings to Communist.*)

### As for man

What do I believe about man, Comrade? Certainly not what you do. Because you are a Communist you see man purely as a material being. If he has

spiritual capacities they are minor and merely serve his material nature.

He is a unit in a vast system. His worth is determined by what he can produce of material goods. But he himself, as Stalin said, is "the most precious capital." Your human being exists for the state. When he can no longer serve the party he has outlived his usefulness.

To you the stirring of the Divine in the human soul is mere superstition. And religion is an opiate of the people, dulling their senses and making them unfit for service. There is no place for God—he has been banished from the universe. And there is very little place for man.

He is a prisoner of the state. His dwelling is at best temporary. You, Comrade, have only such rights as are granted to you by the government—and these rights are limited. You cannot speak freely. You are so controlled you can only see one side of any issue—the Communist side.

You can never hope to own your own business and be your own "boss." Most of your land is the property of the State. And you yourself are a form of property. Your newspapers must print the party's news. Your artists must paint what the state orders and not what they see. Your musicians can express only the soul of Russia. And your school children carry cards containing 20 rules—all designed to encourage loyalty to the party.

*(Spotlight goes to American.)*

What about me? Well, I'll tell you, Comrade. My deepest loyalty is to someone above the state. My rights are conferred from above. I have them because I am a child of God, made in His image.

My state merely confirms the rights my God has given. I can criticize my country. I can even take action to put undesirable candidates out of office. The government is controlled by the people and exists for them. I own my own land and can have my own business.

In our art galleries hang masterpieces from the world of nations. The majority of them are not painted by our people but we praise them because they are great art. Some of them were done by Russians. We neither claim these as our

own nor do we refuse to accord them the merit they deserve. American art is not the only "good art."

Our libraries are filled with books—many of them written in other nations, some in yours. One of your great classics *War and Peace* is well known in this country. Even your "bible"—*Das Kapital*—is found in our libraries.

Yes, Comrade, I am not just a piece of property to be handled by the state. The state is handled by me and millions like me. I am more than material. I am body, mind and spirit.

### As for methods

*(Spotlight on Communist.)*

To you, Comrade, the end justifies the means. That often means you can dispose of people at will or send them off to slave labor. It justifies torture, promotes discord among nations, sponsors bloodshed, and incites revolts—all for the good of the party. Anything is right if it moves you nearer your goal of a so called "classless society".

Party members number only about three per cent of the population. Everyone else is controlled by these few. You stir up revolutions and spread lies. These are the means, Comrade. And as a result your people live in fear. Hundreds of them risk death to flee your borders.

Evil becomes good to you if it serves your interests. But not to us, Comrade. Sometimes we are forced to fight but we do not call war "good". We think of all the persons grief-stricken by a message reading "Lost in Action"—and we cannot call that good even though we may win wars. We are guilty of mistreating our brothers in many ways—but this we do not consider good.

Instead we confess our sins and pray that God will show us a way to be what we are truly called to be. We believe in the fruits of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, long-suffering. These are better than any other means we know. And the Kingdom in which we live does not set brother against brother in a beleaguered fortress of fear. Rather, brother is united with brother in a world of love.

If you can name the youngest son of Amram and Jochebed you can answer question No. 23 across. Clue two says he was found in the water by the Pharaoh's daughter and reared as an adopted son.

## Bible Crossword Quiz

By Paul L. Conrad

**T**HIS quiz will really test your league's Biblical prowess. At the same time it will provide an evening chock full of fun.

For the quiz you'll need one Bible for each leaguer and a large reproduction of the cross word puzzle. You can make this by drawing the puzzle on a blackboard or on a large sheet of paper that can be attached to the wall or an easel.

Here's how the game is played.

If your league is large divide it into two teams. The leader reads statement No. 1 Across to the first contestant. He tries to give the word that answers the question. If he cannot answer it, then he is entitled to look the answer up in the Bible.

When the correct answer is given, the leader writes the word in the squares of the crossword puzzle in the proper place. The answer for No. 1 Across, for instance, consists of a word of two letters that goes in the squares numbered one and two of the puzzle.

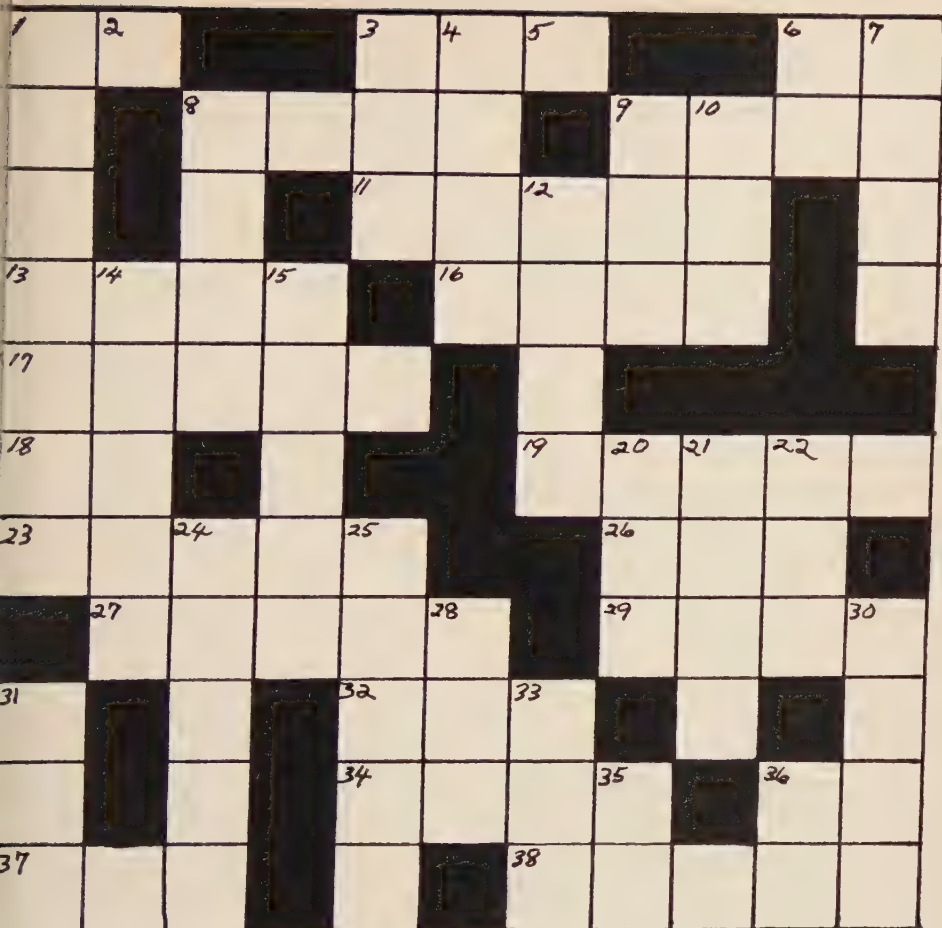
After the first question has been answered the leader asks question No. 1 Down of the first person on the opposite team. The answer is written in the crossword puzzle.

The leader then returns to the first team and asks question No. 3 Across. Continue the contest using "Across" and "Down" questions alternately.

To tell how many letters there are in the answer start with the square numbered the same as the question and count the blocks until you come to a black square. Always go in the direction given for your question. For instance, the answer to question No. 1 Across has two letters. But the answer to question No. 1 Down has seven letters.

To score the game, if the contestant gets the answer on the first try, without hunting the answer in the Bible, he scores five points. If the contestant uses the Bible to answer the question, however, he scores two points. Team scoring the most points wins.

If your league is small, let each leaguer play for himself, rather than dividing the group into teams. In this case if the contestant cannot answer the question let the league guess the answer. If no one knows the answer then give the "Bible open" signal and let the leaguers look up the answer in the Bible. First one to find the answer in the Bible gets two points. Any contestant who answers the question without looking in the Bible gets five points.



# Across

1. A city near Bethel, about 10 miles north of Jerusalem. (Joshua 7:2)
3. Small or limited in number, found Matthew 22:14.
6. The person speaking, regarded as grammatical object, found in Matthew 11.
8. Son of Jotham, king of Judah, and brother of Hezekiah. (II Kings 16:1)
9. The chief male god of the Phoenicians and Canaanites. (Judges 2:13)
11. A seaport of Phrygia Minor, visited by St. Paul. (II Corinthians 2:12)
13. The man that God created and placed in the garden of Eden. (Genesis 19)

16. Father of Adoniram, Solomon's tribute officer. (I Kings 4:6)

17. Son of Bethuel, brother of Rebekah, and father of Rachel and Leah (Genesis 25:20)

18. The king of Bashan, defeated at Edrei. (Numbers 21:33)

19. Youngest son of one Jesse of Bethlehem-Ephrathah in the land of Judah; a shepherd who conquered the giant Goliath. (I Samuel 17:43)

23. Youngest son of Amram and Jochebed. His name means "drawn forth." He was drawn out of the water by Pharaoh's daughter who brought him up as an adopted son. (Exodus 2:10)

26. Liquid measure; equals 12 logs or 280 cu. in. (Exodus 29:40)

27. Grandfather of Abraham. (Genesis 11:25)

29. A prophetess of the tribe of Asher at the time of the birth of Jesus. (Luke 2:36)

32. A pit into which Daniel was thrown. (Daniel 6:16)

34. Father of the prophet Azariah who encouraged Asa king of Judah. (II Chronicles 15:1)

36. A king of Egypt of Ethiopian descent. (II Kings 17:4)

37. The most northern city of Canaan, as seen in the expression "From . . . even to Beersheba." (I Samuel 3:20)

38. A Greek disciple who accompanied Paul in several of his journeys; also, he was sent by Paul to Dalmatia, and was left in Crete to settle the churches. (II Corinthians 2:13)

### Down

1. Third son of David by his wife Maacah. (II Samuel 3:3)

2. "My self," found in Daniel 7:15.

3. Distinguishing characteristic of Eli. (I Samuel 4:18)

4. A famous scribe and priest descended from Hilkiah, the high priest. (Ezra 10:10)

6. Mount Abarim.

7. A valley in Judah where David slew Goliath. (I Samuel 21:9)

8. Son of Omri, married Jezebel. (I Kings 16:29)

9. Distinguishing characteristic of Jezebel. (I Kings 18:13)

10. Great grandson of Solomon. (I Kings 15:8)

12. Son of Boaz by Ruth. (Ruth 4:17)

14. National god of the Philistines, its form had the face and hands of a man, and the tail of a fish. (Judges 16:23)

15. A weight, found in Ezekiel 45:12.

20. Malicious joy. (Psalms 35:21)

21. A plant having a slender, weak stem that may clasp or twine about a support. (Genesis 40:10)

22. A general receiving house. (Luke 10:34)

24. An adversary, opposing spirit (Matthew 4:10)

25. A city destroyed in the days of Abraham and Lot along with Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim. (Isaiah 13:19)

28. To be fire-colored. (Matthew 16:2)

30. A native of Tekoa; a shepherd and dresser of sycamore trees. (Amos 1:1)

31. A staff . . . found in Jeremiah 48:17.

33. An open fabric, woven or tied with meshes, for the capture of fish and birds, (Luke 5:4)

35. Divine Image.

36. Spiritual Utterances.

### For your worship

Hymn: "O Word of God Incarnate" 16  
(CSB)

Psalm: 139

Prayer:

Blessed Lord, Who hast caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning Grant that we may so hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that by patience and comfort of thy Holy Word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which thou hast given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

Scripture: Acts 17:10-15

Hymn: "Thy Life Was Given for Me" 6  
(CSB)

A Bible Triple-Play

Offering

Hymn: "Christian Dost Thou See Them" 7  
(CSB)

Luther League Benediction.

### Answer to Crossword

AI	*	*	Few	*	*	Me
B	*		Ahaz	*		Baal
S	*	H	*	Troas	*	A
Adam	*		Abda	*		H
Laban	*	E	*	*	*	*
Og	*	N	*	*		David
Moses	*		*		Hin	*
*		Nahor	*			Anna
R	*	T	*	Den	*	E * M
O	*	A	*	Oded	*	So
Dan	*		M	*		Titus

# Preview of the Resurrection

## First of two Bible studies on the Gospel of John

**By Charles L. Masheck**

EVERY good writer has a reason for writing. St. John had a reason for putting his book on paper. He gives this in the 20th chapter: "These are written at you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name."

These words follow one of the most moving and dramatic scenes in the gospel. It happened after the resurrection. All the disciples had seen the risen Lord except Thomas. Thomas wouldn't believe them. He insisted on seeing Jesus for himself. When the disciples met together again, Jesus appeared and spoke directly to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see my hands, and put out your hand, and place it in my side; do not be faithless, but believing."

Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!"

This is just what St. John wants every reader of his book to say about Christ.

The Gospel according to John was

probably written in or near Ephesus, which is in Asia Minor.

Ephesus was an important city and the church at Ephesus did a real service to the Christian faith by collecting together many of the books that are now in our New Testament. Saved were at least five letters of Paul. It's very likely that Luke, Acts, and John as well as the three letters of John and the book of Revelation—were written at Ephesus. This totals over a third of the whole New Testament!

The church at Ephesus was begun by St. Paul who rented a lecture hall for his teaching and preaching. He stayed there for two years and became so respected and revered that he was thought of at times as almost a god. This was shown by the fact that St. Paul had a hard

The aim of this topic is to introduce the book of John to the leaguers and then to turn their attention to the meaning of chapter 11.



time keeping handkerchiefs. People would take them and carry them home to the sick in the belief that the sick would be healed if some part of Paul's clothes would touch them. You can read about this, if you want to, in Acts 19:11.

### To believe or not believe

The fourth gospel (John) was written around the year A.D., 100 two generations after the resurrection of Christ. The people to whom it was written lived far away from Judaea. They had never known Jesus personally. The story of Jesus' life was like old history to them.

But St. John shows them that Jesus is not just somebody who lived in the past, but that he is alive today. He is the ever-living Lord.

For these reasons you might say that the book of John is well suited to our needs. We are troubled with the problems of faith and belief. This fourth record of the gospel is the only one that deals with the problem of unbelief.

There are many interesting features in the fourth gospel. For one thing, the

author always gives us an exact picture of what happened. We're told that there were *six* jars of water at the wedding feast of Cana. We're told they were made of *stone*. We're told exactly how many husbands the woman of Samaria had, exactly how many loaves and fishes were used to feed the 5,000.

John is fond of the number seven. His book can be divided into seven distinct sections. He mentions seven miracles that Jesus did and explains them. He lists seven great "I am's," or titles given to Christ. How many of them do you remember?

"I am the Way, the Truth and the Life."

"I am the Good Shepherd."

"I am the Bread of Life."

"I am the Resurrection and the Life."

"I am the True Vine."

"I am the Door."

"I am the Light of the world."

To John seven was the perfect number. After all, weren't there seven days in the week? John's use of this number is just another way of telling about the glory and perfection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

### The universal gospel

The book of John has been called the universal gospel. It is written for people who are strangers to Christ so that they can understand him. It notes, for instance, that the inscription on the cross was written in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek so that all could read it. It's as if the author were reminding us that suffering is a universal language strange to no living soul. John tells us about a global Christ who brings a global message. The gospel is like a net that can hold all nations and peoples of the world and never feel the strain of it. It is a gospel with a world appeal and a powerful match.

### An ache in the heart

Something the Christians could never understand was why the Jews did not believe in Jesus. They tried to explain this unbelief in many ways. Some said

that it was predicted in the Old Testament that the Jews would not believe. Some said the Jews were offended because Jesus said the nation itself would not last. Some said that God had planned it that way—that the Jews would not believe. Yet all these explanations leave us asking questions. The greatest ache in the heart of the early Christian church was the disbelief of the Jewish brethren. Sometimes an aching heart brings bitterness, too, and St. John must have felt that. He pictures the conflict between Jesus and the Jews as being sharp and open. He pictures Jesus going often to Jerusalem and entering into discussions there with the officials of the Jewish religion. They oppose him more and more until it is not safe for him to remain there. He crosses the Jordan for an escape to safety.

### Preview of the resurrection

The world is filled with people who believe and yet don't believe in Christ. Life is a never ending battle between faith and doubt, belief and unbelief. But John also comes to think that some will not believe no matter what you do or how much you prove your case.

While Jesus was resting in safety beyond the Jordan, word came to him and his disciples that Lazarus was dead. The Master decides to go to comfort Mary and Martha.

His disciples say that it's too dangerous and ask him not to go. But he says to them, "Are there not 12 hours in the day? If any one walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. But if any one walks at night, he stumbles because the light is not in him."

These are very strange words. What can they mean?

Jesus is saying that each of us is put into the world to do the work God has assigned to us. As long as we do this and try to seek God's will, no evil or danger will cut us down before it's done. But if we shrink from trouble or from our work just so we can live longer, then we are in danger.

Jesus made up his mind to go to Bethany in spite of the bitter anger of the Jews so that God's truth might be made known. He was going to show them a preview of the resurrection.

### Lazarus, come forth!

What happens at Bethany is not a little frightening. It's a scene that astonishes the reader and fills him with awe. Jesus, Mary and Martha, the disciples and people in the neighborhood, including several Jews, go out to the graveyard.

"Roll the stone away!" Jesus commands. Two of his disciples obey him.

Inside the tomb can be seen the still body of Lazarus, now dead for four days. It is wrapped in its white shroud. The eyes of all those looking on move from the still figure in the tomb to the quiet figure of the Master, deep in prayer. Then, like a thunderclap, the words of Jesus sound out, "Lazarus, come forth!" The still figure begins to move. It struggles to get up. The disciples hurry to help, unwinding the burial clothes.

### True or False?

1. The Gospel of John was written just after the resurrection of Jesus.
2. It was written near Ephesus.
3. John was the only apostle who worked in the church at Ephesus.
4. "I am the bright and morning star" is one of the seven "I am's".
5. John reports 10 different miracles of Jesus.
6. Mary and Martha were sisters of Lazarus.
7. St. John is the only one who ever mentions anyone named Lazarus in the four gospel records.
8. Thomas was called both "The Twin" and "The Doubter."
9. The fourth gospel was the only one written near Ephesus.
10. It is the only one of the four gospels that deals with unbelief.

Answers: 1. False. 2. True. 3. False. 4. False. 5. False. 6. True. 7. False. See Luke 16:20. 8. True. 9. False. 10. True.

Many fell on their knees in an act of awe and belief. Many of the Jews who had doubted now believed, but others returned to tell the high priest what had happened. They were afraid to believe.

St. John uses the account of the raising of Lazarus like a drama to act out a truth before our eyes. Through it he is telling us who Jesus really is. He is the only one who can raise men from death to life, spiritually or physically. Jesus Christ is the Lord of Life. He shows us the way of God among men. Eternal life is the life of God in the human soul.

The raising of Lazarus is the preview of Jesus' own resurrection. It is an announcement to the Jews about who Jesus is. No longer can there be any doubt of his claim to be the son of God. No longer is his gospel in question.

The old invitation stands before us always new—will you doubt or believe?

#### Devotional Period

##### HYMNS:

"Strong Son of God, Immortal Love." 208 (CYH)

"Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty." 101 (CYH) 308 (PSH)

"Immortal Love, Forever Full." 187 (CYH)

"My Faith Looks Up to Thee." 200 (CYH) 211 (PSH)

"Faith of Our Fathers, Living Still." 212 (CYH) 139 (PSH)

SCRIPTURE READING: John 11: 1 to 55.

##### PRAYER:

Almighty God, who dost will that all thy children should believe and be saved, help us that we may not only trust thee, but win others to full faith in thee. Make us ready ambassadors of thy Word that in all we say or think or do we may make known the good news of thy gospel to our friends and neighbors. Help us to love one another even as thou hast loved us. We ask in the name of our Lord Jesus Amen.

##### DAILY BIBLE READINGS:

*Monday.* John 9: 1-12.

*Tuesday.* John 9: 13-34.

*Wednesday.* John 10: 1-6.

*Thursday.* John 10:7-18.

*Friday.* John 10: 19-42.

*Saturday.* John 11: 1-16.

*Sunday.* John 11: 17-46.

#### Discussion questions

1. Where and when was the Gospel of John written?
2. Why does the author of John seem fond of the number seven?
3. Why is the fourth gospel well suited for us today?
4. What does the raising of Lazarus tell us about Jesus?
5. Do you know of any people who do not believe in Christ? Do you know why they don't believe? Is there anything you can do to help them believe?
6. Is it ever safe to say, "Oh, he'll never come to church. There's no use trying to get him."

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# Is God Punishing You?

## Second of two studies on the Gospel of John

By Charles L. Masheck

(The leader should assign the parts in the conversation below to members of the Luther League in advance of the meeting so they can read the dialogue easily.)

LEADER: Hi, everyone! Glad to see all of you here this evening! Hope you're all feeling pretty sharp because I'm going to need some help with this topic. I'll be very glad if everyone says at least something before we've finished. I've asked ..... to read the part of Mike and ..... to read the part of Tim. The scene takes place on the porch of Mike's home. Tim has just dropped in for a visit.

TIM: Hello, Mike, what happened to you?

MIKE: (*limping*) I ran a nail through my foot, Tim. It's really getting me down.

TIM: It hurts a lot?

MIKE: Yeah. It became infected and was awfully sore for awhile. Had me scared, too. The doctor says it's coming along fine now.

TIM: When did it happen?

MIKE: Three weeks ago.

TIM: Then that's why we haven't seen you at church school lately.

MIKE: That's right.

TIM: Well, I just stopped to find out where you've been and tell you we've all missed you. When do you think you'll be coming back?

MIKE: I'm not coming back, Tim.

TIM: No?

MIKE: No, Tim. You know when this happened? It happened on a Sunday morning. I decided not to go to Sunday school and was playing basketball with some of the other kids in the neighborhood. I promised my teacher I'd take the scripture lesson and prayer that morning, but I just didn't feel like it. Well, I was chasing the ball through the weeds and ran a rusty spike in my foot just about the time I should have been reading the scripture.

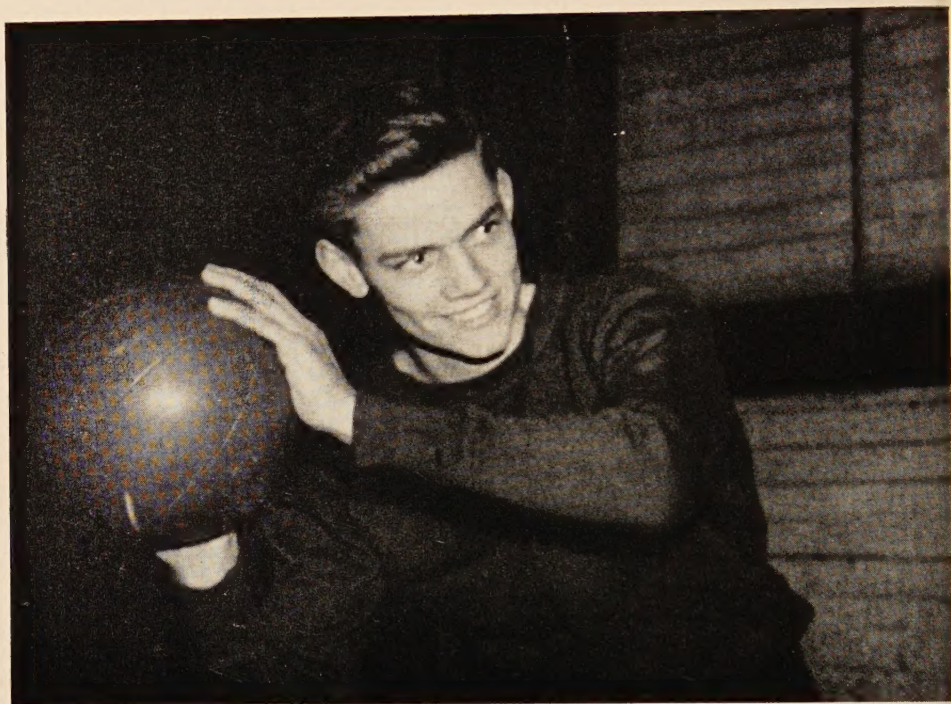
TIM: I think I get you, Mike. You think this was your punishment for not going to church?

MIKE: That's it, Tim. It made me think and I decided that if I hadn't gone to Sunday school in the first place I wouldn't have been punished for not going.

TIM: You just don't think it's fair?

MIKE: No. I don't. After all, there are lots of kids in the neighborhood who hardly ever go to church at all. They seem to get along fine. Here I've been going regularly for several years and this happens to me. It just doesn't seem right. God doesn't punish them. Why should he punish me?

Purpose of the topic: To explain the teaching of John 9:1-12 in modern terms.



When Mike hurt himself playing basketball he figured God was taking it out on him

TIM: You think that God took it out on you for not going to church?

MIKE: That's it. Who else could have done it?

LEADER: Thanks, readers, and now we'll stop a bit and find out what you think of this so far. We'd like to hear from all of you, and if one of you disagrees with something that is said, I want you to say so.

*(Pause here to allow plenty of time for discussion. If no discussion is forthcoming, the following questions may be used to guide the discussion.)*

Have you ever felt the way Mike did about a wrong you committed?

Was Mike right in believing that God had punished him for not going to church?

Did Jesus ever compel people to do what he wanted them to do? What does that tell us about God?

What would you have said to Mike if you had been Tim?

LEADER: Now that every one has had a chance to discuss the problem Mike faced, we'll ask . . . . . to read a passage from the Book of John. Will you read from the ninth chapter, verses 1 through 7.

*(Pause here while the verses are read.)*

LEADER: In the Old Testament times and in Jesus' day many people believed that sickness, deformity, and bad fortune were the result of sin. Sickness was looked at as a form of punishment. Sometimes it was true. When a man did a thing that was wrong, he did feel the suffering that came with it. But sometimes a man who did something wrong suffered nothing because of it. At other times a man who did nothing wrong was punished as in the case of Job. Job was a good man, yet he lost his family, his farm, and all he

ned. On top of that he became sick. But he had done no wrong. Why *do* the innocent suffer?

Many people including the Pharisees said that such a man had still done something wrong and the fact that he was sick in trouble proved it. He might not know what the evil was that he did, but he was still punished for it, because God is a God of justice who does not permit his children to do what is wrong. That is why the disciples asked Jesus, "Who punished this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" They held the current idea that when you had some physical ailment, you were being punished by the Lord for some sin.

Jesus answered that neither the parents nor the blind man himself had sinned. Jesus did not believe that God was a God of revenge waiting in the shadows to jump on us each time we do wrong. Jesus taught instead that God is a loving Father always ready to forgive his children whenever they come to him. He makes his sun to shine upon the just and the unjust, on the evil and on the good."

When Jesus looks at the blind man, it is the same kind of look God gives to those in need. It is a look of pity and compassion. He does not see a man scarred and disfigured by sin, but a child of God whose disfigurement is an opportunity. It is a way through which the love of God may be shown to man.

It's as if Jesus is inviting all who follow him, all who love him, to look on the sick and the broken, the disliked and outcast with the same look of pity. When we show them love and kindness we give the love of God an opportunity to shine through.

Now I've done enough talking. Using what we've learned, we'll try to do our little play over again. I'd like to ask the same two readers to take the script again and see if things turn out any better. We'll take up just at the place where Mike says he's not coming back to church school.

## The Meeting of Mike and Tim (Revised)

MIKE: I'm not coming back, Tim.

TIM: No?

MIKE: No, Tim. You know when this happened? It happened on a Sunday morning. I decided not to go to Sunday school and was playing basketball with some of the other kids in the neighborhood. I promised my teacher I'd take the scripture lesson and prayer that morning, but I just didn't feel like it. Well, I was chasing the ball through the weeds and ran a rusty spike into my foot just about the time I should have been reading the scripture.

TIM: I think I get you, Mike. You think this was your punishment for not going to church?

MIKE: That's it, Tim. It made me think, and I decided that if I hadn't gone to Sunday school in the first place I wouldn't have been punished for not going.

TIM: I don't quite understand you, Mike. You think that if you had never gone to Sunday school, God wouldn't punish you?

MIKE: Somehow, Tim, I figure when I started in church I owed him something and when I didn't come up with it, this happened.

TIM: As you see it, it was kind of a bargain between you and God?

MIKE: I guess that's the way it is.

TIM: Do you really think God treats people that way?

MIKE: I'm afraid I do, Tim.

TIM: You mean that God punishes every person whenever he does wrong?

MIKE: (*scratching head*) Well, maybe that's too strong, Tim. But just read the Old Testament once. Everytime God's people do wrong, they suffer for it. Everytime they do what is right, he rewards them.

TIM: You say, 'Old Testament.' Is that because you think the New Testament is different?

MIKE: I hadn't thought about it at all.

TIM: Well, as far as I know, Jesus

never believed that God punished people for doing wrong.

MIKE: That's a new twist. Are you sure?

TIM: I'm positive. Jesus taught that God is a loving Father. He doesn't hate us.

MIKE: Well, who punishes us then?

TIM: We punish ourselves, Mike, as far as I can tell.

MIKE: You mean that I'm punishing myself when I say that I won't go back to church?

TIM: You could be.

MIKE: Gee, I never thought of that before, but I still think I did something wrong. Don't you think I did?

TIM: Whoa, Mike. That's one you have to answer for yourself.

MIKE: (*More or less to himself*) And I was adding another wrong on top of the first one. I guess I'm still not clear about it, Tim, but do you know of anyone who has done wrong and God didn't punish them?

TIM: Everybody sins, Mike. If all we do wrong were counted against us, we wouldn't have a chance. But just think of those people who nailed Jesus to the cross. He asked God to forgive them. He didn't punish them at all. Maybe they were haunted by what they did for the rest of their lives, but God was still

willing to forgive them if they just asked for it.

MIKE: This is pretty deep for me, Tim. Guess I'll have to think it over. But has been good talking with you.

TIM: So long, Mike.

MIKE: So long, Tim. See you in church.

#### PROGRAM HELPS

##### HYMNS:

"O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go" 202 (CYH) 275 (PSH)

"Dear Lord and Father of Mankind" 215 (CYH) 223 (PSH)

"God is Love; His Mercy Brightens" 256 (PSH)

"Jesus, Lover of My Soul" 190 (CYH) 260 (PSH)

SCRIPTURE: John 9: 1-12.

##### PRAYER:

Almighty God, who dost move in strange and mysterious ways thy wonders to do, forgive us of our sins, and help us to forgive as we are forgiven. Cleanse us of secret faults. Help us that we may understand ourselves better and grant us those things we need for thou dost know us better than we know ourselves. Bless each one here and prosper our Luther League that it may grow and that others may be welcome. This we ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

##### DAILY BIBLE READINGS:

*Monday.* Psalm 1.

*Tuesday.* Matthew 5: 43-48.

*Wednesday.* Luke 23: 32-34.

*Thursday.* I Corinthians 13:1-13.

*Friday.* Psalm 130: 1-4.

*Saturday.* Job 1: 1-22.

*Sunday.* John 21: 15-19.

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